The German Tribune

Hamburg, 5 March 1989
Twenty-eighth year - No. 1361 - By air

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF THE GERMAN PRESS

C 20725 C
ISSN 0016-8858
DEPOSE A BRX X

West must stand firm on Rushdie's side



Khomeini is a fundamentalist. His call for the murder of British writer Salman Rushdie ought to remind the West that it too has fundamental principles to defend: freedom, human dignity and the protection of life.

Two views have clashed, and it is clear that our vision of a harmonious, fraternal world culture is inaccurate.

Reactions so far by the civilised world have been inadequate. At the very least consideration should be given to further sanctions that hurt Iran harder and more effectively.

The Teheran regime may in the past repeatedly have acted in breach of international law and international agreements, but taking hostages, waging war, executing thousands of people without trial and secretly sending out hired killers is intolerable, yet not without precedent.

The Ayatollah's public call for Rushdie's murder, with a price on the writer's head, is unprecedented.

The reluctant, almost grudging response by public opinion in much of Europe is all the more amazing. It was days before associations and organisations that are otherwise always ready to draft protests and collect signatures had as much as a word to say on the subject.

A number of leading intellectuals might have vanished from the face of the Earth, so little was heard from them immediately after Khomeini's murder call. Were they afraid? Did they fail to appreciate the situation?

Many Western intellectuals, and German intellectuals in particular, have longed lived in an imaginary world of resistance, fortitude and rebellion.

Blockading a road or squatting on a field can be made out to be an act of martyrdom, being interrogated by the police as a kind of torture — or so one is led to believe by what many of them have to say for themselves.

Both in Germany and in many other European countries protest moves that cost nothing are made out to be demonstrations of courage. Maybe that is why many people have still not grasped the dimension of the Iranian murder threat.

Yet it is clear how we ought to react to Khomeini's effrontery. Rushdie's novel must be published and Iran must be forced, by all means available, to countermand its murder call.

One of the misunderstandings that beset some intellectuals is the know-all argument that in Rushdie's case the West is merely intent on prevailing over Islam with sanctions and protests in support of its views on culture and morality.

But no Western state has sent troops into Iran to force Teheran by the barrel of a gun to respect human rights, and no Western leader has called for the Ayatollah's assassination merely because Iran breaks the fifth commandment.

Since Khomeini's murder call the civilised world has been in a state of self-defence. What it now does, or leaves undone, will have unforeseeable consequences for its self-esteem, its principles and its viability.

We may smile about literature, writers and their pinpricks, but what if our culture had to come to terms with a writer in its midst having been the victim of a murder campaign while it had nothing to say on the subject, keeping quiet out of either fear or incompetence?

Against this background the confusion over the publication of Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* in German is all the more ignominious. It is still unclear whether the book will be published and if so, when.

(Twenty-five German publishers have since agreed to publish the novel under a joint imprint, with many well-known writers agreeing to feature on the title page as its editors.)

Even the German Booksellers Association initially had nothing better to do than to lash out at writer Hans Magnus Enzensberger for criticising Rushdie's German publishers.

Enzensberger, who was the only literary figure to speak out in immediate outrage, accused the publishers of cowardice and offered to edit the book himself.

Instead of demonstrating solidarity at a time of danger the booksellers association criticised Enzensberger for his alleged lack of moderation.

True, no-one can be forced to show courage, but those who are prepared to share responsibility for the book's publication ought at least to be given an opportunity to do so.

There must be no illusions about the situation. Salman Rushdie may indeed be killed. It is already clear that he will be a hostage to fear for the rest of his life.

His publishers are in fear and trembling, as are booksellers, trade associations and reviewers.

Even if Khomeini's "order" is countermanded the Ayatollah may well have destroyed the writer's life. Calculated cruelty of this kind could easily have its effect on writers, artists and journalists all over the world.

That is why the West must make it clear to Iran what would happen if Rushdie were to die.

The Ayatollah must be made to realise that he cannot intimidate the world and that the world is prepared to make sacrifices for the sake of its principles.

Every day counts, and those who purport to "understand" or to "explain" the murder call must stop doing so immediately.

Whatever religious upset may have been caused by Rushdie's book, it has been rendered of secondary importance by Khomeini's threat.

We are thus witnessing not just a political clash but one of the most important cultural conflicts of the post-war era.

No-one knows how it can be resolved, but Iran must be made to understand that an outraged world is on Salman Rushdie's side.

Frank Schirrmacher

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 23 February 1989)



Weizsäcker in Tokyo

Emperor Akihito meets German head of state Richard von Weizsäcker (right), who was in Tokyo for Emperor Hirohito's funeral. (Photo: AP)

IN THIS ISSUE

Anglo-German ties: the quiet alliance

Anglo-German relations have often been overshadowed by Franco-German ties. The "quiet alliance," a much-vaunted catchphrase, is intended to indicate that it is nonetheless sound and reliable.

That can surely be said to be the case at present, but it cannot serve as a convenient formula by which to unthinkingly brush aside upsets and different points of view.

Mrs Thatcher and Herr Kohl had not held bilateral talks for two and a half years when they met in Frankfurt. They are now to meet again in two months' time.

Further coverage of the Frankfurt Anglo-German summit on page 2 (Thatcher and Kohl agree to disagree) and page 5 (Germans 'admirable but an enigma' as British see them).

Holding the talks in Frankfurt rather than in Bonn must partly be seen in the context of the forthcoming local government elections in Hesse. Chancellor Kohl likes to link foreign and home affairs.

For Mrs Thatcher the venue presented an opportunity of meeting Bundesbank president Karl Otto Pöhl, who shares her misgivings about a European currency union (although largely on grounds that differ from hers).

It also gave her an opportunity to note that Frankfurt-born Goethe had been inspired by Shakespeare. The final declarations yield no clue as to whether there was any repetition of the process this time.

Mrs Thatcher continues to prefer slower progress toward European inte-

Continued on page 2

■ NATO TIES

Missiles are sure to be an issue

Since the CDU's poor showing at the polls in Berlin Chancellor Kohl has been sure he doesn't want a missile debate, certainly not at the moment.

That was why he chose to toe the line adopted by Foreign Minister Genscher, who for some time has counselled biding time on the subject.

So Bonn's answer to US and British urging is that there is no need for action to be taken right now.

Even at the Nato summit in May the Chancellor sees no need to do more than reaffirm the modernisation option. The "real decision" need not be taken, as far as the Bonn coalition is concerned, until 1991.

In other words, the issue is, if at all possible, to be kept out of the forthcoming general election campaign. The SPD Opposition already suspects the coalition of pulling the wool over voters' eyes.

The likelihood of stationing new short-range US missiles in Germany playing no role in the general election campaign is slight, and for two reasons:

1. The Vienna talks on conventional arms control in Europe present Mr Gorbachov with an opportunity of raising the issue of tactical nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union is in any case keen to see this aspect taken into account, especially as Nato has always argued that it needs tactical nuclear weapons to offset *the East's conventional superiority.*

There is thus a logical connection between the two weapons categories. The Wintex exercises that are shortly to be held will leave no doubt on this score either.

2. The West's long-awaited overall concept is due to be presented at the May Nato summit. It is unlikely to be accepted without contradiction, neither by critical opinion in Nato countries nor by the Soviet leader, keen as he is on disarmament.

So both conference will deal with arms and disarmament, including missiles, as topical agenda items. And so they should.

There is no other way in which military bureaucrats either in Western capitals or at Nato headquarters in Brussels can be persuaded to draw up alternatives.

The prevailing viewpoint on Nato strategy continues to be flexible response, as adopted in 1957, even though the INF Treaty's ban on medium-range missiles has demolished one of its cornerstones.

Two responses to the INF Treaty are possible. Either you try to compensate for the missiles scrapped (then there is no need to change strategies) or you change your strategy.

Nato prefers the first approach, although compensation is only possible to a limited extent — the extent not covered by the terms of the INF Treaty.

That is why "Lance missile modernisation" includes plans to station missiles with a range of nearly 500km instead of the Lance's 120km.

In more everyday terms it is not a matter of launching the VW Golf (or Rabbit) to replace the Beetle but of moving upmarket to, say, a BMW.

US and British urging may be understandable, but so is the Chancellor's hesitation. Missiles with a range of 450km will, in the event of war, be aimed at targets on German soil or in neighbouring Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

That makes no sense, not to mention nuclear devices already modernised that have such a limited range they would inevitably be used in Germany — grenades or mines, say.

Stockpiled in depots in northern Bavaria, for instance, they ought, in the opinion of serious military experts, to be the first to go.

Robert McNamara, the man whose brainchild Nato's flexible response strategy was, is strictly and unreservedly in favour of withdrawing theatre nuclear weapons, arguing that they only deter the Germans on whose doorstep they would land.

Leading members of the Bonn coalition such as Alfred Dregger, Volker Rühe and Werner Hoyer now agree.

The inference to be drawn from this is that a strategy debate is overdue in Nato, yet none is in progress, at least not in public.

This failure to hold one is what will make missiles a campaign issue, and one that may cost votes.

Wolfgang Schmieg

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 18 February 1989)

Thatcher and Kohl agree to disagree

Mrs Thatcher can hardly have expected to hear anything else from Helmut Kohl on short-range missile modernisation in Frankfurt than what he had told US Secretary of State James Baker at the Chancellor's Office in Bonn.

Yet in order not to have to admit that they had made absolutely no headway on the issue in Frankfurt the Chancellor and Britain's "Iron Lady" referred to the compromise formula reached at the last Nato summit.

It was a formula that left all modernisation options open. Besides, Herr Kohl and Mrs Thatcher were so insistent on agreeing in principle that they must surely be poles apart in practice.

Washington and Whitehall continue to say a decision must be reached on missile modernisation at the Nato summit in May.

They both bank on security as the mainstay of an "overall security and arms control concept" and are determined only to negotiate with Mr Gorbachov from a position of strength.

Bonn in contrast stubbornly insists on a mandate for talks with Moscow on short-range missiles to be held alongside the Vienna negotiations on conventional stability in Europe.

The Germans thus favour giving arms control priority in Nato's "overall concept." Britain, like America, sees this as Gorbomania.

Mrs Thatcher is equally unlikely to have learnt whether Chancellor Kohl, in

Continued on page 8

Overwhelming public support for Nato and Bundeswehr

Defence is a much talked-about issue these days. Hardly a month passes without fresh news items about opinion poll findings that people in the Federal Republic of Germany do not feel particularly threatened and are less willing to defend their country than they used to be.

True, there have been and still are problems of consensus and acceptance when it comes to means and methods of keeping the peace.

Low-altitude flying and full-scale manoeuvres, conscription and exercises, arms expenditure and nuclear weapons are all controversial in the public eye, and criticism has grown more heated and voluble.

But can that also be said of the Federal Republic's basic foreign and security policy orientation as laid down when it joined Nato in 1955?

Does the crumbling consensus on defence spending, means and procedures apply to the aims and essentials of Bonn's security policy? Are the foundations starting to shake too?

The answer, in a word, is no. There can be no question of a departure yet from the foreign and security policy fundamentals and basic decisions that have held good for decades.

An overwhelming majority of people in the Federal Republic continue to wholeheartedly endorse integration in the West, Nato membership, the stationing of US forces in Europe and the existence of the Bundeswehr as guarantors of peace and freedom.

Mr Gorbachov's "new thinking" and the enthusiastic reception it has been given by the German media have, despite widespread views to the contrary, had no effect on public opinion where these essentials are concerned.

Since the 1960s opinion polls have regularly probed public attitudes toward Nato membership. The findings have been fairly consistent.

The number of Germans who wanted the country to quit Nato has always been below 10 per cent, so not one German in 10 has felt the Federal Republic ought to leave Nato in the past 20 years.

Serious anti-Nato sentiment did not reach double figures at the height of the 1982/83 missile modernisation debate or, for that matter, last autumn (the latest date for which figures are available).

Conversely, between 80 and 90 per cent of people polled have been in favour of Nato membership. The autumn 1988 figure was 86 per cent.

On what other political issue can there said to be such stable and convincing majorities, despite considerable differences of opinion on details?

This is equally true of the younger generation, which otherwise holds markedly different views on almost all political issues. In the autumn 1988 Emnid poll 7[illegible] per cent of 16- to 24-year-olds were in favour of staying in Nato, as against 15 per cent who wanted the country to quit.

The manifesto of the Greens envisages withdrawal from Nato, yet only 37 per cent of Green supporters were in favour, the majority preferring the Federal Republic to stay in the North Atlantic pact.

Other features of the groundwork of post-war German security enjoy similarly substantial and consistent support:

- eight out of 10 Germans polled feel the stationing of US forces in the Federal Republic is a contribution toward safeguarding the peace;
- eighty-two per cent feel the existence of the Bundeswehr makes peace safer;
- two out of three are convinced that Nato and the Bundeswehr are, between them, strong enough to protect the Federal Republic from a military attack.

In comparison with past figures, confidence in Nato even increased last year, despite the growing malaise about nuclear detente and defence.

So there can be no question of an acceptance and legitimation crisis of German Nato membership.

The lack of specific alternatives is a pointer to how self-evident it is felt to be.

Only a handful of Germans favour stronger national defences; the overwhelming remainder have vague ideas of neutral status "between the blocs" at some future date.

The Federal Republic lacks secure national frontiers. In its endangered Central European location it is dependent on allies for protection, and the overwhelming majority of Germans are evidently well aware of this simple fact.

There is, for instance, growing support for the idea of a joint Franco-German brigade, with 58 per cent of Germans polled now favouring the idea.

They may feel less acutely threatened in the wake of successful disarmament negotiations, and a majority may be in favour of better relations with the Soviet Union, but Nato membership is not called into question. Most Germans feel membership of Nato is a matter of course.

Attitudes toward the Bundeswehr are another matter in the context of a growing feeling of relative security.

Former Bonn Defence Minister Manfred Wörner, now Nato secretary-general, says acceptance problems are always problems of political leadership.

If this is true then it is up to security policymakers in the government and political parties to tell the public clearly and simply that — and why — we continue to need an effective defence capability.

Bernhard Fleckenstein

(Das Parlament, Bonn, 17 February 1989)

The German Tribune

Friedrich Reinecke Verlag GmbH, 3-4 Hartwicusstrasse, D-2000 Hamburg 76, Tel.: 22 85 1, Telex: 02-14733.

Editor-in-chief: Otto Heinz. Editor. Alexander Anthony. English language sub-editor: Simon Burnett. — Distribution manager: Georgine Picone.

Published weekly with the exception of the second week in January, the second week in April, the third week in September and the third week in November.

Advertising rates list No. 16
Annual subscription DM 45

Printed by CW Niemeyer-Druck, Hameln

Distributed in the USA by: MASS MAILINGS, Inc., 540 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.
Postmaster: send change of address to The German Tribune % MASS MAILINGS.

Articles in THE GERMAN TRIBUNE are translated from the original text and published by agreement with leading newspapers in the Federal Republic of Germany.

In all correspondence please quote your subscription number which appears on the wrapper, between asterisks, above your address.

Continued from page 1

gration than most members of the European Community. She is more concerned with the wider framework than with bureaucratic details.

Plans for extending the "social dimension" of the European internal market are not in tune with the mental outlook of Thatcherism. Above all, Britain — and the British Press — increasingly feel there are grounds to doubt whether Bonn is entirely reliable as a Nato partner

Signs of a tendency toward neutralism or toward irresponsible arrangements with Mr Gorbachov are felt to be apparent, with Herr Genscher being mainly to blame. Against this background the short-range missile modernisation dispute, on which the Chancellor would prefer to postpone a decision until after next year's general election, assumes the proportion of a matter of principle.

Both sides have relied for too long on the dynamism of continuing cordial relations between Britain and Germany.

The obvious outcome and right conclusion to be reached from the Frankfurt talks is that a closer, more sensitive dialogue is now needed.

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 22 February 1989)

■ PARTY POLITICS

CDU and SPD running neck and neck in Frankfurt

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

"All we can do now is pray," sighs a leading Christian Democrat, showing signs of frustration and depression in view of the latest local election poll forecasts in Frankfurt and Hesse.

After three terms with an absolute majority in Frankfurt the CDU seems sure to be heading for a devastating defeat in the 12 March local government elections.

According to an Infratest poll commissioned by the SPD the Christian Democrats could not even retain power if the FDP were to stage a comeback in Frankfurt (and form a Bonn-style coalition with the CDU).

Fifty per cent of voters questioned said they would vote either SPD (40 per cent) or Green. Thirty-seven per cent favoured the CDU (32 per cent) or the FDP. Twelve per cent were undecided.

Pre-election opinion polls are notoriously unreliable, but Hesse Premier Walter Wallmann and his party well know that once the SPD regains power, on its own or jointly with the Greens, in Frankfurt, where it held sway until 1977, the CDU's days in power in Hesse could be numbered.

So all eyes will be on Frankfurt, where CDU Oberbürgermeister Wolfram Brück is hoping to pull off a miracle.

His SPD challenger, Volker Hauff, has gained so much ground over the past year or so for the SPD, which was reduced to a mere 34 per cent in 1981, that Mayor Brück, whose advisers are clearly banking on the four-week election run-up, is breathlessly trying to catch up with him without making any clear headway.

Worse still, the Infratest poll (of 1,002 Frankfurt voters) shows Mayor Brück to rate more poorly in the electorate's esteem than Herr Hauff on almost all issues.

Voters clearly feel that the city council is not doing all it might to solve problems such as traffic control, the environment, debts, corruption and housing.

Are opinion polls of this kind mere "dubious readings of coffee grounds," as the CDU now claims? The CDU-led Hesse government commissioned a similar poll the findings of which were similarly depressing for the Christian Democrats.

Frankfurt is thus no longer seen as a "test vote;" Mayor Brück has even referred to it as a "make-or-break vote."

As in 1987, before the state assembly elections, the spectre of Red and Green coalition chaos is conjured, calling the future and prosperity of Frankfurt as a financial centre and Hoechst as a centre of the chemical industry into question.

"Hoechst and Cassella workers," warns Cologne-born Brück, "be careful who you vote for!"

His predecessor as mayor, Premier Wallmann, sounds a similar note, hoping to "save our city" from a Red and Green coalition.

"If the traffic lights are set at red and green simultaneously," the CDU warns, "there will be traffic chaos in Frankfurt."

But it isn't just "the last minute," as CDU officials claim, trying to mobilise the party rank and file; it is much, much later.

The weeks to come alone will show whether the much-vaunted shock of the Berlin election results has had the effect on the rank and file CDU general secretary Franz Josef Jung claims — or scepticism and resignation have gained yet more ground in view of the poll forecasts.

Housing is in short supply, rents are high, transport and traffic policy and, above all, the handling of corruption scandals have dealt the CDU's prestige a serious blow.

The Christian Democrats, and particularly Herr Wallmann, may have done much to help Frankfurt refurbish its image, but these and other scandals have hit CDU support hard.

The Christian Democrats are trying to counteract their negative image by means of symbolic keywords such as "home," "jobs," "housing" and "metropolis."

Herr Hauff has no compunction in praising Herr Wallmann's accomplishments on Frankfurt's behalf, then roundly condemning the work done by his successor, Mayor Brück.

The SPD candidate bases his campaign on a triad of economic, social and arts policies. And wherever he makes a public appearance there is a full house

People who work in the arts give him a hearing, as do the young, upwardly-mobile professionals who can evidently well envisage him at the city's helm. The election results will show whether Martin Wentz and Frankfurt's left-wing SPD, which used to be so dispute-ridden, have succeeded in opening up the party and gaining the support of new voters.

They may, of course, withhold support for a Red and Green experiment that now seems a foregone conclusion.

The Christian and Free Democrats have categorically ruled out any idea of throwing in their lot with the SPD. The Greens' choice of candidates has totally ignored the fundamentalist wing led by Jutta Ditfurth.

The political positions held by the Greens' *Realo* wing bear such a strong resemblance to those espoused by the *SPD that Herr Wentz, the city's SPD* leader, says he feels almost worried.

The remainder of Hesse pales in significance when compared with the struggle for Frankfurt, although the right-wing Republicans, who are standing in two constituencies, are sure to be given media coverage.

In conservative Fulda they are not standing, having failed to comply with electoral regulations.

The SPD hopes to at least equal its 1985 showing (SPD 43.9, CDU 38.6, Greens 4.9, FDP 4.4 per cent).

The local government election results are sure to be taken as the voters' judgement on Premier Wallmann, whose CDU-FDP coalition has held power in Wiesbaden for two years.

It will be the first time voters have been able to voice views on the subject at the ballot-box.

Heinrich Halbig

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 18 February 1989)

Volker Hauff or Wolfram Brück? Voter's choice for mayor of Frankfurt.

(Photos: Werek, Sven Simon)

Thin-skinned Christian Democrats show signs of mid-term nerves

Not even longstanding associates of the Chancellor's can remember ever having seen Helmut Kohl as nervous as he has lately seemed to be.

The CDU leader does not show signs of nerves in public, of course. Outwardly he continues to pose as overwhelmingly optimistic and imperturbably thick-skinned.

In private his — and others' — nerves are on edge. Herr Kohl, or so CDU leaders say, has grown thin-skinned.

That doesn't really tally with what his immediate associates were saying only a few months ago.

Wolfgang Bergsdorf, the Chancellor's *home affairs adviser (and counterpart* to Horst Teltschik, his foreign affairs adviser), forecast a serious decline in the public standing of the Federal government and, with it, of the CDU/CSU.

With swingeing health service and tax reforms ahead, he said, the government's popularity was destined to hit rock-bottom.

But no-one need worry. By spring 1989 — Easter or Whit at the latest — the coalition's popularity would steadily increase. So there was no cause for alarm, let alone panic.

Why, then, is Herr Kohl nervous at all? The Berlin election results are the reason why. He and the CDU had ruled out two possibilities.

One was that the Social Democrats and the Greens might not just emerge with a clear numerical majority in the Berlin House of Representatives but be prepared to join forces.

Given past experience the SPD seemed to be sick and tired of courting the Greens.

The other was that a political party might emerge to the right of the CDU/CSU and gain so much ground at the Christian Democrats' expense as to become a serious political factor.

The tenor of public opinion was clearly totally misjudged in this respect.

What now makes Herr Kohl so nervous is the gloomy prospect that results from the trend such developments seem to set.

The Hesse local government elections seem sure to see further setbacks for the CDU, which will probably lose Frankfurt.

Elections to the European Parliament are to be held on 18 June. So are local government elections in the Rhineland-Palatinate and the Saar.

It is too late now to stage a counter-offensive and hope to reverse the trend.

That may also be true of the local government elections in North Rhine-Westphalia on 1 October and in Baden-Württemberg on 22 October.

Once a change in public opinion has gained momentum it is increasingly difficult to bring it to a halt, let alone to reverse it.

Some members of the CDU/CSU console themselves with the thought that only one major reform — of posts and telecommunications — lies ahead before next winter's general election.

Other forthcoming events, such as Mr Gorbachov's visit to Bonn, are expected to be plain sailing, yielding nothing but merit marks for the Bonn coalition.

For one, this view underrates the risks. The reform of the postal and telecom services seems sure to be a foolhardy repetition of past mistakes.

To this day the Federal government has failed to clearly explain to the general public why the reform is necessary and what it is intended to achieve.

Regardless whether or not it is true, it is not enough simply to say that reforms are urgently needed in view of the European internal market.

Other members of the CDU/CSU seek solace in lashing out at CDU general secretary Heiner Geissler, whom the Chancellor is bound to back, as otherwise he himself would be the butt of even more trenchant criticism.

Or they clamour for a strategy debate, a call that is always heard when the party feels particularly helpless and at its wits' end.

The Christian Democrats would do better to remember that they are the major middle-of-the-road political force — and to say so in all self-confidence.

Besides, a government — and a party — that pursues sensible policies that the voters understand and appreciate — because they are explained to them — has no need of strategy debates. It has something more substantial to show for itself.

Walter W. Weber

(Saarbrücker Zeitung, 18 February 1989)

FOCUS

Neo-Nazi ban highlights need to fight right-wing fringe

Michael Kühnen is the man behind the neo-Nazi scene in the Federal Republic. Wearing army boots and making the Hitler salute he marches into the headlines.

He was again in the headlines because Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann tried to make use of him to disprove what cannot be disproved; that he, Zimmermann, doesn't see right-wing extremism as a potential threat to parliamentary democracy in the Federal Republic because he doesn't want to.

Nothing has changed with banning Kühnen's *Nationale Sammlung*. It was just a successor to a previous Kühnen group banned in 1983.

If the former ban is not to become just nonsense and Zimmermann loses his credibility then he has had to act in this way now.

Zimmermann wants to make us believe his move is a "blow against the neo-Nazis."

If he intends to do that he must act against the rabble-rousing, anti-foreigner propaganda. He has halted the expansion of the neo-Nazis but he has not put a stop to them.

So Kühnen is well known from the recent headlines. And Gerhard Frey? Have you heard of this rich Munich publisher and his publications? *Nationalzeitung*, for instance, is available every week at newspaper stands.

Most Germans probably do know him; they will certainly have heard of Franz Schönhuber, leader of the Republican Party.

But they probably won't have heard of Wigbert Grabert, Professor Hornung, Arnim Mohler, Bernard Wintzek, Hellmut Diwald, Caspar von Schrenck-Notzing; the list is long.

It would be as well to get to know them in good time to understand what they think and intend.

Schönhuber's election success in Berlin has made these men restless. They believe that the time is ripe for the new German right to come out into the open.

If that is the case it is the result of their own activities. They are the wire-pullers, the ideologists, the strategists beyond the right-wing of the CDU/CSU to the furthest right you can get.

They have worked to create a powerful infrastructure of discussion groups, study centres, book publishing and information services.

One objection can be made. One can ask what the extremely conservative publicist Caspar von Schrenck-Notzing has to do with the extreme right-wing publisher Gerhard Frey, and what this has to do with the neo-Nazi scene, which makes use of violence?

Karlheinz Weissmann, one of the astute strategists in this group, provides a provisional answer at least. He said: "Fear of contamination has dwindled. The lines of demarcation between nationalists, national revolutionaries, the new right and conservatives have become blurred."

He quotes the neo-nationalist Bernard Willms: "Anyone who was worried about being called a fascist is a collaborator and a coward."

Let us begin at the extreme right-wing. There are here close to 450 extreme right-wingers who, according to the *Verfassungschutz*, the Cologne-based counter-espionage agency, are "militant."

Over the past ten years they have been involved in 25 deaths and many people severely injured.

Their targets are foreigners and asylum-seekers. They are involved within and outside the neo-Nazi scene.

But the line of demarcation cannot be drawn as cleanly as that, for the police are constantly making impressive arms finds among neo-Nazis, particularly automatic weapons.

Michael Kühnen is one of the organisers of this; his "Liberal German Workers Party" is one of the organisational centres. They want a nation led by a Führer, no democracy and no foreigners.

The National Democrats (NPD) and the Deutsche Volksunion (DVU), both making up the so-called old right, have in general distanced themselves from these violent groups, mainly for tactical reasons.

They want to win votes. They are taking a parliamentary path to power. In times when their successes are to say the least modest, Hitler salutes and acts of arson do not help.

In the Baden-Würtemberg state election they gained only 2.1 per cent of the vote; in Schleswig-Holstein 1.2 per cent.

The electoral alliance with Frey's DVU did achieve something: their joint ticket has one member in the Bremen House of Representatives.

They cannot compete with Schönhüber's Republicans for popularity, of course. But where ideas are concerned they need hardly worry.

The National Democrats maintain that the fundamental points of Schönhuber's programme have been copied from NPD guidelines.

On the Schönhuber programme Alfred Dregger, CDU/CSU parliamentary leader, has again said: "They have copied most of it from us."

Max Streibl, CSU Prime Minister of Bavaria, confirmed this. CDU general secretary Heiner Geissler disagrees. He said that they were formerly the NPD and must be fought against as such. The Republicans are, in fact, extremists, he said.

Who is what? Is today's CSU the former NPD, or are the Republicans today's

DEUTSCHES ALLGEMEINES
SONNTAGSBLATT

CSU, or the other way round or what? Whatever it might be Schönhuber's message is clear: "Reunification without ifs and buts, an end to the Nazi past, tough attitudes to foreigners and asylum-seekers."

For years the so-called intellectuals from Grabert to Schrenck-Notzing have hammered away at these themes, levelling out the way ahead.

There is for instance Arnim Mohler, until he retired director of the Carl Friedrich von Siemens Foundation, a first-class think tank.

He said: "The deadly sin of post-war conservatism was that it believed it could neglect the task of winning back a sense of national identity out of consideration of Hitler and the past."

The consequence has been: a halt to the National Socialist debate, to make reunification and nation a theme with which the right can again lead.

Bernard Willms, a political scientist, is



Notorious neo-Nazi Michael Kühnen (centre) at ceremony to mark the first anniversary of Rudolf Hess's death. (Photo: dpa)

also involved in these activities. He is one of the leading representatives of neo-nationalism, a group which regards the nation as the greatest good on earth.

Willms said: "There are no ideas that rank higher than the notion of nationhood or of the nation as a higher principle." He regards the continuous arguments about Nazi criminals as "a weapon of oppression of the Germans as a nation."

For years others including Mohler and the historian Diwald have worked against this and now they obviously have success, for Caspar von Schrenck-Notzing, publisher of the right-wing intellectual magazine *Criticon*, can happily confirm that "with the revival of the debate about reunification the conservatives have come back to a theme that should be theirs."

The credit is not entirely due to them. They could not have set up the requirements for this alone.

Indeed Mohler demanded a general amnesty for Nazi criminals in 1965, and again in 1985 Professor Hornung demanded that CDU politicians should state clearly that "the Nazi past really belongs to the past."

But historian Ernst Nolte, Joachim Fest, managing editor of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, and others, who have tried to take the position in the historical dispute about the genocide of the Jews, that it was not a unique event, have given right-wing intellectuals their opportunity.

The principle of an unencumbered debate about the nation and reunification has arisen from them.

There is a third theme which is closely connected with this and portrays the character of this nationalism: alleged foreign infiltration.

Arnim Mohler takes the view that "National Socialism has provided the people with emotional experiences, which are unthinkable today, and in that there is a recipe for success.

"The asylum problem, which is becoming urgent, could make a populist right-wing strong."

In the thoroughly conservative magazine *Criticon* the state of the nation was analysed in this way: "The biological potential of our people is dying out... A clear trend to alien infiltration can be quantified."

In this, in fact, the character and the danger of this representation of nationalism is clear. It is not only completely excessive but it closes itself off from everything foreign, admits only the Germans.

It is, in effect, "an ethnic nationalism." This is how Dieter Oberndörfer, a professor in Freiburg, referred to it in another connection.

Oberndörfer said that the pattern of thought of this nationalism "was deeply rooted in all of us." He was writing in *Sonde*, a theoretical magazine closely linked to the CDU.

He said that a step to overcoming this deep-seated nationalism "would be the liberalisation of immigration and asylum legislation."

According to the law as it is today "no Jews who fled the country after 1933 until the outbreak of the war" would qualify for political asylum in the Federal Republic, Professor Oberndörfer argues.

It is just this which gives success to the right-wing and seems once more to have become acceptable.

For instance, Wigbert Grabert of Tübingen publishes books with such titles as *Auschwitz-Mythos* and *Kriegsschuldlüge* as well as *Handbuch zur Deutschen Nation*, written by neo-nationalist Willms.

Writers for an anthology include Christa Meves, publishing editor of the *Rheinischer Merkur*; Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner, among other things publishing editor of a series entitled *Initiative*, published by Herder-Verlag.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl visited the Grabert stand at the 1985 Frankfurt Book Fair, and Grabert still uses this in its advertising.

Another example, one of many: Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner writes in the magazine *MUT* and publishes books in the same publishing house.

Helmut Kohl admits that he is a "regular reader" and Defence Minister Rupert Scholz gives interviews to this glossy magazine.

In the counter-espionage agency's report of 1984 it was described as an extreme right-wing publication. It is published by Bernhard Wintzek, who is the editor-in-chief as well. He is a former founder of "Aktion Widerstand."

This is, then, a collection of right-wingers who, for example, disparage Willy Brandt and Herbert Wehner as "renunciation politicians."

The 7.5 per cent vote for the Republicans Party in Berlin has worried the CDU/CSU stiff. All at once everything is there — building houses, the rights of foreigners and tough attitudes against asylum-seekers.

Kaltenbrunner said that this is the way right-wingers profited from the "penury of Christian Democrats;" and from "the failures of the centre," according to Schrenck-Notzing. The extreme right-wing scoops up voters who are disappointed with Kohl's government.

The time is ripe, the question of organisation pressing, according to their strategy paper.

Right-wing German nationalists are arming themselves to make a bid for power. And those who are making the bid are no longer outsiders.

Wolfgang Storz

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 17 February 1989)

EUROPE

Choice between integration and reunification?

When scientists, journalists and diplomats from East and West get together for round-table talks they are rarely at a loss for topics of discussion.

At the moment their interest centres on the various facets of developments in the two "halves" of Europe: economic trends, the human rights situation following the successful talks in Vienna, and security and disarmament.

The experts who come along to such gatherings are, as a rule, no strangers; they have known each other for years: The meeting in Berlin's Political Club was no exception.

Insofar as reference is to Europe, East-West relations is synonymous with deliberation on detente and disarmament, confidence-building and cooperation; in short, the "European order."

The European Community, its proposed single internal market, the idea of a European Common House and perestroika are just some of the key concepts on which views are aired.

The major changes in the international political environment find their expression in the minor details of such discussions.

The traditional dividing line of East-West confrontation began losing the clarity of its contours some time ago; now it has disappeared altogether.

Without all the verbal pussyfooting around possible sensitivities an analysis from a West German perspective of the economic situation in Comecon member states comes to the conclusion that their economies are passing through a process of restructuring marked by a growing orientation to Western Europe and a de facto dissolution of the Comecon framework.

The analysis claims that their industrial plant and equipment is obsolete, that their products are not internationally competitive, and that some Comecon members are in fact no more than developing countries.

This may be true, but such an assertion would have been misunderstood as a provocation not so long ago. Today it is confirmed as correct by the Poles.

The economic aspect was only one of the subjects of particular significance.

The German Question and security problems in general, both closely interconnected, were also priority issues.

The discussion broached something which is preferably neglected by public discussions in the Federal Republic of Germany.

It showed just how intensely other countries are preoccupied with the German Question, especially those which shape its future.

It was no coincidence that the most emphatic statements in this connection were made by countries which still retain responsibility for Germany as a whole.

It was interesting to note (yet again) just how dominant a role the German Question plays in French thinking.

It almost seemed as if detente, disarmament, the single European market, Western integration, glasnost and democratisation trends in Eastern Europe are regarded as just variations on one and the same theme.

The question asked is: how can the status quo of division be retained, safeguarded and cemented? The answer given is: with the help of the single European market and integration.

Yet even this solution is not apparently above suspicion.

One of the French fears voiced during the discussion was that, despite all claims to the contrary, the support of the Federal Republic of Germany for greater European integration and the internal market could be rooted in a secret desire to use the influence of a powerful single market to bring about German reunification.

The fact that West German politicians have repeatedly given assurances that they do not want reunification in the near or not so near future doesn't seem to help.

The decisive factor is not so much what they say, but what is perceived in France as the objective political reality. The German Question is the decisive point of orientation.

This perception and the associated considerations were frankly formulated.

Concern that something could be set in motion in Central Europe jeopardising the status quo — especially moving towards neutrality — was so great in some cases that even blocking detente would be considered at the first sign of a risk that the German Question might be getting out of control.

In this line of thought the GDR plays an important role.

For Paris it is the watchdog which disciplines the Germans "the way we like to have them."

The French motive for fostering integration in the European Community is fear of the idea of a Central Europe, the idea that detente and a no more than slight disengagement of the great powers in Germany might revive the popularity of the idea of a Central Europe and that the Federal Republic of Germany might "swim along" with this sentiment.

This is why the French President is so keen on integration, even though the

Frankfurter Allgemeine

creation of the internal market will not be able to completely allay such fears.

During the discussion it became clear that this concern was primarily directed against the notion of a "Common European House".

Soviet guests at the discussion felt that the foundation to such a project could be the agreements on human rights recently drawn up in Vienna.

This was not the only occasion on which the Soviet line of argument followed Mr Gorbachov's statements.

In his speech to the United Nations the Soviet leader professed his support for a "single organism of the world economy" outside of which no state could develop normally.

This implied a renunciation of an isolated socialist economic system.

Together with his recognition of the "right of all people to free choice" and his appeal for a policy of a balance of interests by all and with all, Mr Gorbachov's ideas were reflected in the remarks made by the Soviet speakers in Berlin.

Mr Gorbachov's reference to the "right of peoples to free choice" was defined in more precise terms.

This includes the right of every peo-

Continued on page 15

Germans 'admirable but an enigma,' as the British see them

Britain and Germany have much in common, says David March, the *Financial Times* correspondent in Bonn, in an article written fot the *Frankfurter Rundschau* on the eve of Mrs Thatcher's visit to Frankfurt for Anglo-German consulations with Chancellor Kohl. But they need to take each other less for granted with missile debate and European internal market clashes ahead.

Between West Germany and Britain, there is neither fascination nor fear. The relationship is not over-intense, but not over-friendly. A form of mystified curiosity characterises bilateral links. In Frankfurt today when Mrs Thatcher comes to explore the soul of Mr Kohl, mystification is likely to dominate.

The Germans are puzzled how the British can go on living in their little island without worrying more about lead in the petrol, becquerels in the milk, nitrogen oxides in the air and cadmium in the sea.

Now that the UK is becoming concerned about listeria in cheese, and a junior Minister beloved of Mrs Thatcher has resigned over salmonella in eggs, the Germans have cause to feel relieved. The British are finally behaving like normal people.

The British find the Germans admirable, but also an enigma. Being separated by the Channel an the Low Countries rather than simply the Rhine, the English — unlike France — can afford to take a more detached view of the strengths and the weaknesses of the Germans.

But, because Britain remains an island, it is a view in which prejudice and downright ignorance unfortunately still play a large part.

Generations of British schollchildren have been told that Britain won the Second World War, and a sizeable portion of the economy is kept alive making films, writing books and distributing memorabilia about the event.

The British consequently find it difficult to explain, when they occasionally drive through Germany on cheap coach holidays to the Adriatic, why the war-shattered country and its houses, cars and public installations are all invariably larger, cleaner and more expensive-looking than in England.

The Germans are indisputably reestablished as the industrial powerhouse of Europe. The German economy may have been going through a phase of slower growth, and Mrs Thatcher's Britain may have engineered a "get-rich-quick" economic revolution by curbing the power of the unions and inflating the prices of houses.

But that is no substitute for the solidly-implanted industrial might of the Germans. The future will belong to the countries which can produce sophisticated capital goods for the world markets at attractive prices. The Germans, for all their faults, have shown that this is a speciality which no-one can take away from them.

West Germany's enormous and still growing trade surplus is of course a sympton not simply of virility. The Germans save too much and consume too little (especially of imported goods); the British — see Mrs Thatcher's problem of ballooning trade deficits — are just the opposite.

But the Germans would worry about spending to much, especially if at the same time they were adding to pollution; the British are more or less indifferent about both matters.

It is ironic that Mrs Thatcher's public image is one of almost dictatorial high-handedness, whereas Mr Kohl is portrayed as a well-intentioned bumbling *Biedermann*. Have the roles been reversed?

One must never generalise about national character, but the British are popularly thought of as the indecisive muddlers, whereas the Germans are, at least in British war films, the regimented brutes.

Mr Kohl has to take account of the German proportional electoral system which avoids the formation of large majorities and puts a premium on consensus and coalitions.

Mrs Thatcher can rule with a massive majority in the House of Commons with an average of only 43 per cent of the popular vote over the three general elections since 1979.

One of Mr Kohl's favourite long-winded anecdotes is how he won 48.6 per cent of the votes standing against Schmidt in 1976 and still failed to a form a government.

Mrs Thatcher can afford to have a forceful style, Kohl cannot.

There us however another reason for the differences. The Germans, by history, are condemned no longer to have strong leaders, and Kohl is the product of history.

Mr Kohl is not an outstanding man: he is neither extraordinarilly good nor extraordinarilly bad. He seems to put all his energies into the task simply of remaining Chancellor for as long as possible.

The British are pleased to hear that the days of greater German ambitions are gone, but have no interest to know anything more about him.

Many normal English people, if asked who Kohl was, would probably think he was the manager of the German football team. Indeed, Kohl told me in an interview last week he used to be *sehr begabt* ("very talented") at football and said the Federal Republic was like a First Division football team trying to stay at the top of the league.

This is an apt analogy, and one that would appeal to the English. There is far more conversation in English pubs about football than about politics, whereas, in Germany, ordinary people really do talk about Mr Genscher or the *Ozonloch* in their spare time.

The Germans are extremely interested in knowing what other people think about them, whereas the British, who have a well-hidden, deranged sense of superiority, could not care less. Thatcher and Kohl however seem both to share the quality of not being very interested in what the other person has to say, and concentrating far more on their own message.

While Britain's Margaret Thatcher is more precise than the verbose Mr Kohl, both are extremely argumentative. Mrs Thatcher is intellectually quicker, but Mr Kohl has better manners. Mr Kohl feels much more strongly more than Mrs Thatcher the need for a united Europe, but in practice there is probably very little difference. Mr Kohl does not

Continued on page 9

■ ECONOMY

Withholding tax and the single European market



Withholding tax is a rewarding subject for discussion. In Europe, as in the Federal Republic, it meets with applause and catcalls.

Opinion on the need for a standard European Community rate of tax on earnings from savings and capital investments varies depending where you are and what your interests are.

The Germans, who have just introduced a national withholding tax, can preen themselves on having strongly supported the European Commission's plans.

In many other spheres the British, Dutch and Germans form a single front in the Economic and Financial Council. But the Federal Republic now stands apart from other member-countries on the question of tax harmonisation.

Is an alignment of tax rates really necessary to ensure the liberalisation of capital movements? Just a short while ago Bonn answered no. Now Bonn is saying yes, even if in a cracked voice.

Apart from hopes of blocking tax-evaders' well-trodden path to Luxembourg, Bonn is certainly acting out of consideration of its political friends, the French.

They have continuously made their readiness to support the abolition of capital market controls dependent on joint minimum regulations in the battle against the flight of capital, mainly made up of taxes unpaid.

They fear, and rightly so, that a too marked tax differential within the single European market will lead to untoward movements of capital and put liberalisation measures already agreed once more into question.

The British, allegedly so closely bound to the market, say: "If that is so, you must reduce your taxes."

The Dutch, on the other hand, puritanically, speak up for systematic stock exchange control returns from banks to the tax authorities.

No-one wants to reduce taxes, neither finance ministers nor those who are concerned with the same tax treatment on earned incomes and yields on capital.

The Federal Republic and Luxembourg want nothing to do with stock exchange control returns. They regard these as an infringement of bank confidentiality, which is regarded as sacrosanct, and they sense state snooping.

Gerhard Stoltenberg has said that in a stardardised single European market there can be no place for tax havens.

In his view Luxembourg, as a financial centre, operates with conditions which must be adjusted in the course of the formation of a common European economic and currency area.

But this does pose the question: how otherwise can a small country maintain its position as a financial centre?

Certainly a certain tax differential will be necessary at the very least to attract funds to the *Grand Duchy*.

The main objection to a withholding tax is that there is the danger it will not achieve its purpose.

The flight of funds to third countries can only be prevented if the European Community is shored up on the outside by strict controls.

The decision to abolish internal controls on capital is practically a compulsion for external liberalisation.

The French, who will be allowed to open a bank account in the Federal Republic in future, can hardly be prevented from looking for favourable investment opportunities for funds deposited here.

Each new withholding tax in the Community increases the temptation to switch to third countries.

The Dutch Finance Minister can be grateful to Stoltenberg for the influx of funds into Holland after the introduction of the withholding tax in the Federal Republic.

Should more capital vote with its feet, public budgets will have to reckon with higher interest rates and charges. This will mean that additional tax revenue will be lost to some extent at least.

The Commission intends to maintain the attractions of European financial centres with special provisions.

These include exempting Eurobonds from withholding tax and giving preference to citizens domiciled outside the Community.

The more exceptions there are made to the rules, the more limited will be the results that can be expected from the tax. Its opponents can take comfort from the fact that it cannot get so bad again.

Nine member-countries have their own form of withholding tax and two have automatic stock exchange control returns. That should be enough to intensify the problem. There are opportunities over the next few months to think about solutions. All that is needed is the political will to compromise.

Wilhelm Hadler

(Die Welt, Bonn, 15 February 1989)

Bane of inflation begins to worry sensitive Germans

Süddeutsche Zeitung

A characteristic of the present trade cycle is that fundamentally there is nothing spectacular about it. There are no powerful fluctuations upwards or downwards to unleash feverish activity again.

So it is not surprising that the economic upswing has cautiously approached each condition in which warning lights are now blinking.

This is the case at the moment and the *blinks refer mainly* to price trends, which have accelerated over the past few weeks.

There has been much praise for having tamed inflation: but it is again rearing its head.

In this respect the past three years have been intoxicating. The value of money remained stable in 1986 and 1987. The rate was just above or just below the zero mark. The retail price index increased by 1.2 per cent during 1988.

But in the last months of last year it could be seen that this average inflation rate for the year was only of transitional value.

'Alarming' 2.6 per cent

The inflation rate for January had already reached the 2.6 per cent level in comparison with last year.

The price index for the cost of groceries rose all of one per cent in December and January alone.

This monthly rate obviously exaggerates the actual situation, because single special factors have substantially influenced it.

This was primarily brought about by indirect tax increases from the beginning of this year.

These price increases, ordained by the government, account for a good half of one percentage point, hence about a half of the December-January index increase.

Otherwise the inflation rate would then have been about two per cent.

Obviously the Wiesbaden-based Federal Statistics Office's annual inflation rate calculations will have to be scrapped.

A clue to this is the most recent industrial output prices. In January they were 2.9 per cent higher than a year ago.

That is the steepest increase in four years.

What appears in the production stage today emerges in wholesale prices tomorrow and in consumer prices the day after tomorrow.

Most economic experts predict that the average inflation rate for 1989 will be 2.5 per cent. But we have already reached that rate.

Under these conditions it will be three per cent by the end of the year.

Many causes have contributed to this development. A vital point is that the stability factors for foreign trade are no longer functioning.

Oil, an important raw material, has become dearer. Furthermore the deutschemark has lost ground to the dollar, the currency in which oil is traded.

Last year, when the trend was going in the opposite direction, exports took ware of price stability.

In times when money values are absolutely stable, price stability compensates fully for the domestic rate of inflation – a rate of two per cent was mentioned.

These times are now past. What is worse is that German industry is operating very close to full capacity and must turn more and more often to working overtime, which is expensive, and which contributes to further increases in the inflation rate.

This is a worry to officials in the Bundesbank. The Bank is at present the only authority which can effectively counter progressive inflation.

The Bank admittedly has allowed too much monetary growth. The sins of the past are now being revealed, times when the Bank pumped more money into the economy than the economy could bear from the viewpoint of price stability.

Cyclical and export trade grounds rule out the use of blunt instruments such as higher interest rates or a credit squeeze.

The only course which remains is to apply more sophisticated curbs with the foreseeable consequence that the rate of currency erosion will be accelerated for a time.

Helmut Maier-Mannhart

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 22 February 1989)

■ FOOD

Gamma rays: consumers must choose

The day is not far off when we will be able to buy a grilled chicken in a supermarket, cooked, vacuum-packed and given radiation treatment.

Its shelf life could be up to eight years, and all you have to do is heat it up.

Two years ago in *Time* magazine physicist Martin Welt, founder of an American radiation company, spoke in this way about his dream of preserving food.

After 1992 his vision could become reality in the single European market. At the end of last year the European Commission made proposals for standardising the regulations governing foodstuffs in the Community.

These proposals approve radiation treatment for 12 products, including strawberries, poultry, mangoes and frogs' legs.

In Germany and Britain radiation treatment to preserve food is generally prohibited. Producers in Belgium, France and Spain are permitted to preserve herbs in this way.

In Holland the use of radiation treatment is allowed in principle. Limited quantities of radiation are permitted to prevent potatoes, onions and garlic from germinating.

There has been considerable debate about the advantages and dangers of this method of preserving food since the US Marines in the 1950s examined whether food could be preserved for submarine crews by radioactive bombardment.

The advocates of the process turn to the investigations carried out by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the World Health Organisation and the International Atomic Energy Agency in the late 1970s.

In autumn 1980 a committee reported that a maximum dose of radiation of ten kilogray was completely harmless to good health.

Physicists express the amount of energy absorbed by a kilogram of matter (measured in joules) in units of gray.

Critics of the method, mainly consumer associations and the West German Farmers Union, do not see eye to eye with the report by the UN's experts. They doubt very much whether it can be rated entirely harmless.

The working group of consumers associations advised caution. A spokesman said: "Many examples in the past show that materials, classified by scientists as completely harmless, are today in many cases forbidden."

The Bonn government has not taken up a position but calls for further tests to show how necessary radiation is.

The Bonn government seemed prepared to relax the general ban as regards herbs.

Since it has been forbidden, then, to treat herbs with ethylene oxide — it has been shown that the gas can cause cancer — the foodstuffs industry has been looking for a substitute.

There are five radiation plants operating in the Federal Republic. Their system is applied to exports and hospital meals. They would very much like to step in.

The nuclear energy industry has also shown interest. Caesium 137, made famous by the Chernobyl reactor meltdown, and Cobalt 60, which is a by-product of nuclear fission, are both suspected of being the source of the controversial gamma radiation.

Food subjected to radiation is not itself radioactive. Radiation knocks out electrons as it passes through the food molecules.

Products of radiolysis, the chemical decomposition of substances by radiation, are created. They are aggressive substances which critics claim can change genetic factors and cause cancer.

Professor Konrad Pfeilner of Bonn University, an opponent of the method, has reported on Russian tests with rats, which have been fed radiation-treated food.

Scientists observed disturbances of kidney functions and a weakening of the immune system.

Other scientists have examined undernourished Indian children, who have been fed with radiation-treated wheat. They confirmed that the children showed anomalies in their white blood corpuscles.

It is hard to believe the statement that radiation treatment is similar to conventional heat treatment. Silke Schwartau of the consumers centre in Hamburg said: "It is well-known what happens in cooking."

She added that research should be undertaken to find ways of curbing the harmful substances, which are found now in most foodstuffs.

But what happens when radiation methods are applied? She said: "DDT may decompose with radiation and become even more lethal."

Instead of reducing pollution by dangerous chemicals, which supporters of the method always claim as an advantage, *radiation bombardment could* create additional harmful substances. But no-one knows much about this.

Scientists cannot say in detail what happens when a chicken, or a strawberry or a prawn is bombarded with massive amounts of energy.

Many vitamins are lost through radioactive conservation methods, particularly vitamins C, A, E and B_1. An apple, treated with radiation, only retains 30 per cent of its original vitamin C content.

With limited doses of radiation there is also a decline in the albumen content.

Frequently the colour and taste of food is altered by this method of conserving food. These shortcomings are made up for by aroma and colour additives, according to the consumers associations.

There could possibly be more dangerous elements in the food than fewer, as promised. This could also apply to the number of disease-causing agents, which are the reason why food is treated by radiation in the first place.

A maximum dose of teh kilogray, as proposed by the European Commission, does not kill all germs. Many microbes are resistant to radiation treatment, including the botulinus bacillus, which frequently causes fatal food poisoning called botulism.

The danger, according to one foodstuffs chemist, is that radiation seeks out specific micro-organisms.

What is particularly disturbing is that purchasers could not detect spoiled food by its appearance or smell, because radiation has destroyed the typical putrifiers.

Consumer protection stands or falls with the proofs of radiation methods of preserving foods. So far the standard techniques have not been suitable for

Continued on page 8

Diversifying: from brand-name potatoes to industrial starch

West German agriculture is putting its hopes on starch. The national image of the potato has improved no end and there has been a constant increase in sales.

There is also more and more talk about starch for industry. But here it is recognised that extensive research has still to be done.

There are now more than 100 potato diets available. The contents of the recipes are fully explained. In this way the old image of the potato as fattening has been overcome.

Rice and noodles have not driven the potato out of diet plans, and even the very best restaurants include potatoes on their menus.

In 1972 the Central Marketing Board of German Agriculture brought out the "AckerGold" joint trade mark, although everyone knew then how difficult it would be to make the potato into an item of mass-market appeal.

Consumers had to get used to the quality trade mark in their shops. Now 76 per cent of all adult consumers know the "AckerGold" trade mark.

But five years ago companies knew that it was not enough to concentrate on quality by buying in supplies on the free market, careful sorting and strict quality control.

The retail foodstuffs trade wanted a continuity in supplies with top quality potatoes throughout the season before the trade was prepared to make more shop space available for potatoes.

There are now 400,000 farmers linked together by agreements: in addition 110 warehousing and distributing companies and 130 "AckerGold" packing companies all over the Federal Republic have concluded cultivation, supply and purchase contracts.

In the past few years one million tons of potatoes, 700,000 tons of maize and

DIE WELT

300,000 tons of wheat have been processed into 750,000 tons of starch.

The foodstuffs sector used 400,000 tons of this starch, industry the remaining 350,000 tons.

These figures broken down show that 135,000 tons was taken up by the paper-manufacturing industry, 115,000 tons by the chemicals industry and 50,000 tons by corrugated cardboard producers.

The lack of research into the uses of starch is the reason why it has not before been more widely used in the chemicals industry and industry generally.

It has been recognised in the Federal Republic that something must be done about this lack of coordinated research in universities and industry. This has led to the setting up of a combined project.

Although starch is present in any number of plants it is primarily produced from maize, wheat and potatoes in the European Community and the world as a whole.

Potatoes and wheat are cultivated in the Federal Republic as the basis for starch production. Maize is not used because there is no variety available that is suitable to the climate.

The cultivation, care and harvesting techniques of crops to be used for making starch are hardly any different from the methods used in agriculture to produce crops for foodstuffs and animal feed.

It is hoped that new varieties of potato will increase yields ofthe vegetable per hectare for starch production.

Efforts are being made to develop varieties of maize suitable for the Federal Republic and for starch production.

Success has been achieved in cultivating peas rich in amyl.

There are considerable differences in the production of starch from potatoes, on the one hand, and from maize and wheat on the other; starch from potatoes can only be obtained seasonally, while starch from maize or wheat can be obtained throughout the year.

The reason for this is that potatoes can't be stored for as long as either wheat or maize.

In the industrial sector there are three areas where starch can be deployed. Starch is either used as a source of glucose, a cheap macro-molecule or for specialised applications.

Interest in starch as a source of carbons will probably increase for biotechnical processes and as a source of glucose.

The requirements for carbon sources in biotech applications will also increase as a result of this, because laboratory and pilot methods, tested biotech production processes, are going into operation for a whole series of substances.

Considerable growth in demand for carbons can be expected in the immediate *future for the production of* special chemical and pharmaceutical products.

The high consumption of carbons results mainly from the typically unfavourable relationship between carbons and the end product in the manufacture of specialised products.

Bearing German agricultural interests in mind sectors have been identified which could prove successful if additional research funds could be made available.

This involves the development of new techniques for the cultivation and harvesting of these raw materials to obtain starch for technical purposes.

The investigations into new uses to which starch could be put in various industries are especially important, particularly as regards quality requirements for raw materials.

For this reason emphasis is being given to renewable raw materials. Marketing methods will be examined, the potentials of markets in the medium- and long-term will be defined and various other ideas looked at, such as how new market potentials can be supplied by German products.

The purpose of all these activities is to find out how starch produced in the Federal Republic can be used continuously and effectively outside the foodstuffs industry.

Despite all these activities, however, one point must be emphasised; a short-term solution of existing agricultural problems will not be found by cultivation to produce industrial starch.

There is still a lot of research to be done in producing strains, conversions and application techniques to achieve results of any consequence to agriculture.

It is also necessary for industry to show a certain amount of creativity and readiness to take risks.

(Die Welt, Bonn, 26 January 1989)

■ VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Third World trainees learn their trade in Germany

Barry Alexis, 33, from Grenada has still not come to terms with the culture shock. He has been in Germany since last November yet is reminded almost daily how different life here is from life back home in the Caribbean.

Take Christmas. "Back home we hold an open-air carnival on Christmas Eve," he says, "whereas people here sit around indoors."

The weather is something he feels sure he will never get used to, yet he has no regrets about spending the next two years in a country where he will have to wear a sweater more often than a tee shirt.

He is a motor mechanic and as keen as mustard to make a success of his course at the Mannheim trades training centre of the Berlin-based DSE, or German Foundation for International Development.

The DSE also has a food and agriculture training centre in Feldafing, Bavaria, an education and science training centre in Bonn and a public administration training centre in Berlin.

Since 1960, when the DSE was founded by the Federal and *Land* governments, an estimated 70,000 management and craft trades trainees from the Third World have attended courses.

The DSE is answerable to the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation, which funds its operations.

The Mannheim training centre trains trades college instructors from Third World countries too. When they return home they will train trades college students in their own countries.

Herbert Burk, the centre's director, feels investing capital in the Third World is not enough — certainly not enough to constitute meaningful development aid.

Investors who merely set up and equip factories don't do enough, he says. "What the Third World lacks is skilled maintenance staff, people who can handle equipment on their own."

That is why the Mannheim centre has trained over 9,400 scholarship-holders from Afro-Asian and Latin American countries in the past 25 years.

These young people are "multipliers," he says — people whose knowledge and skills, acquired in the Federal Republic of Germany, will be handed on to others in the Third World itself.

The Mannheim training courses are no cake-walk; great expectations are placed in scholarship-holders on their return from Germany.

It is hard work for both scholarship-holders and their instructors. Miguel Ramos, a Peruvian on the same course as Barry Alexis, outlines what is expected of him back home:

"When I arrive back home and say I have spent two years in the Federal Republic I will be told: 'Oh well, in that case you must now be able to do everything.'"

That is why both he and Barry are disappointed with the level of training provided in Mannheim.

It is far too low, they agree. At the same time they concede that expectations back home are both exaggerated and unrealistic.

Yet the modular training system the Mannheim staff claim is so exemplary is also criticised by scholarship-holders.

"There is no shortage of either modules or material," says Samuel Ken-Bassie from Sierra Leone, "but there aren't enough instructors."

Automobile mechanics instructor Pham Doan Duong agrees. "We have 13 instructors but need at least 30 to operate the modular system satisfactorily."

He nonetheless feels there is no better system. The modules, or course units, offer scholarship-holders a wide range of learning opportunities.

Each module is a complete unit combining theory and practice. If scholarship-holders were to take all modules offered, they could lay claim to the most comprehensive training.

In some cases they are unable to do so because too few scholarship-holders apply to study a particular module at a given time.

There must be half a dozen, otherwise the course is not taught — because there aren't enough instructors to go round.

Herr Burk feels he has much more pressing problems. Many Mannheim trainees aim for promotion as soon as possible when they fly back home, which often means they leave vocational training and fail to have a multiplier effect.

Instead, they go into industry, where they can earn more money. They undertake to work three to five years in vocational training on returning home, but surveys in Guatemala and Sudan show that many in fact drop out.

Half the 180 Mannheim scholarship-holders from Sudan were found to have quit vocational training on their return; the figure for Guatemala was 50 out of 130.

Yet Herr Burk feels these percentages are bearable. "They aren't the dead loss we had feared," he says.

A further problem is that vocational training in the Third World still often places too much emphasis on schooling.

On the job training is often neglected, amounting to little or nothing. This aspect is paid particular attention in Mannheim, where the emphasis is on theory *and* practice.

Training courses and the modular system are accompanied by practical courses at selected German companies. In Costa Rica the Mannheim centre is backing an on-the-spot attempt to introduce the "dual" system of vocational training.

Mannheim hopes it will be able to persuade Costa Rican trade associations to mediate between employers and government training facilities in a reform of vocational training.

Herr Burk remains realistic. "We can only make suggestions," he says. "Responsibility lies with the country in question."

So his centre concentrates on training Third World scholarship-holders in Mannheim. His 600 trainees are to be given a grounding in modern trades such as motor mechanics and automatic control engineering.

Between 1985 and 1988 the funds at the centre's disposal increased from DM9m to DM18m a year. Most went toward staff salaries.

There is now a tutor for each of the 140 groups that are studying a course unit. He must be both a specialist and a person the scholarship-holders can approach and consult personally.

Scholarship-holders are paid DM1,000 a month, of which DM250 is deducted for rent. Trainees with families send every pfennig they can save back home.

With cash in hand strictly limited, the culture shock can hit scholarship-holders hard. They need someone to approach who can help them and remotivate them.

Frank Schwaibold

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 21 February 1989)

Continued from page 7

routine use. Electron spin spectroscopy is used to monitor the treatment of meat, fish and seafood, if these have bones or shells. The method is very costly, however.

Since the beginning of this year Federal Republic food controllers have used a second, cheaper method to check these foodstuffs: thermoluminescence.

The equipment registers the weak light which foodstuffs emit when exposed to energy rays.

But foodstuffs controllers cannot confirm with this method, for instance, whether wild marjoram or paprika have been treated with Cobalt 60 before these herbs were used in the manufacture of sausages.

Consumer associations are demanding that there should be an obligation to label all products. The European Commission's proposal to label only goods in which more than 25 per cent of the ingredients have been subjected to radiation treatment is not good enough.

Labelling (or not) could determine whether the preserved goods are accepted on the market.

Since Chernobyl and the nuclear reactor scandals which have recently hit the headlines, many consumers now have no time for foodstuffs which have been treated by radiation.

Thomas Bastar

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 17 February 1989)

Continued from page 2

his much-quoted interview with the *Financial Times* ("real decision not until 1991/92"), was toeing Foreign Minister Genscher's line or just trying to bide his time until after next year's general election.

The Chancellor, Britain too has been told, wants neither a third zero solution nor an election campaign in which missile modernisation is a key issue.

Herr Genscher is meanwhile taking care to ensure that not one conceivable European security option is buried.

Before Herr Kohl confers with Mrs Thatcher at the end of April in Oggersheim, the Mannheim suburb where he and his family live, to iron out the differences between Bonn and its Anglo-Saxon allies, he must first try to reconcile the differing viewpoints within the CDU/CSU and the Bonn coalition.

Time is short, and a date for coalition talks on this issue has yet to be arranged.

There may have been no sign of substantive consensus on the controversial short-range missile issue, but Mrs Thatcher took good care of Herr Kohl, as it were.

Britain is keen on seeing greater attention paid to the "quiet alliance," as Herr Kohl also calls the special relationship between Britain and Germany.

In Bonn there are similar plans to give Anglo-German relations more of the star billing that Franco-German ties enjoy.

It is always worth arguing a case with Mrs Thatcher, who sought to enlist the Bundesbank's support against a European central bank and a currency union that would amount to a deutschemark zone.

It would be as well to remember that Britain is fond of fence-sitting and usually doesn't jump onto a bandwaggon until it has started to roll and is gaining momentum.

Udo Bergdoll

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 22 February 1989)

Management for Soviet executives

Hamburger Abendblatt

Industrial executives in the Soviet Union have much to learn where market-oriented company management is concerned.

The German Federal government has offered to help Soviet management trainees to learn more about supply and demand and cost efficiency.

In the process, Bonn is keen to work hand in hand with German industry.

A wide-ranging programme of basic and further training courses for Soviet management trainees and executives is planned in Bonn.

Agreement is scheduled to be reached in time for Mr Gorbachov to sign a treaty during his state visit to the Federal Republic of Germany in mid-June.

Industrial companies and organisations such as the Carl Duisberg Society in Cologne and the Otto Benecke Foundation in Bonn are to be in charge of works traineeship and seminar-style training arrangements.

An initial cash input is to be provided by the Federal government. It will be funded by the Foreign Office.

The Bonn government's financial backing will run for an initial three years, amounting to DM3m this year and DM6m in 1990 and 1991.

The Soviet Union is keenly interested and impatient to launch the scheme. Some experience of Soviet trainees was gained last year, but the present plans are without precedent.

They were triggered by Chancellor Kohl during his visit to Moscow last October. He offered 1,000 skilled workers and executives from the Soviet Union training and further training facilities in the Federal Republic.

The idea came from the German industrial executives who flew with the Chancellor to the Soviet Union.

Soviet officials took the Chancellor at his word, saying the sooner a programme was implemented, the better.

The Otto Benecke Foundation is to offer its first in-house and company training courses for Soviet trainees from this month in conjunction with the German Mechanical Engineering and Plant Construction Industry Association.

The Carl Duisberg Society plans to offer fresh courses in April. Five hundred Soviet trainees could attend courses with German companies this year.

Once practical experience has been gained and contacts have been established in Germany, German experts are to run training courses in Western free market economics in the Soviet Union.

Plans even go one step further. The Bonn Education Ministry is in touch with the Soviet authorities in connection with possibly running a German-style vocational training system, suitably geared to meet Soviet requirements, in the Soviet Union.

Wolfram Kroeber

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 14 February 1989)

■ TRANSPORT

Plastic-framed bike designed for status-conscious buyer

In the early 1960s the motor-car was considered an unsuitable subject for students at the Ulm college of design.

"It was regarded as a luxury item," says designer Michael Conrad, a former student, and thus ruled out by purists as inappropriate for design studies.

Yet Conrad was one of the first Ulm students to take a serious interest in car design. He worked as an automotive designer for many years, but now feels there are too many cars.

What particularly annoys him is that the motor-car, a mode of transport which is anything but environment-friendly, largely serves as a status symbol.

He sees the pushbike as a sound alternative to the car. He and his Ulm partner and former fellow-student Dieter Raffler have designed a new all-plastic cycle frame.

They hope their stylish, lightweight bike will appeal to a new category of consumers, "people who used to be too car-fixated and would not otherwise be keen to bike it," Raffler says.

Do they see their smart new bicycle with it all-plastic frame as a Porsche among pushbikes? Yes, more or less. It is certainly not envisaged as a low-cost product. They see it as selling for "not less than DM2,000."

If common sense has failed to persuade many motorists to switch from four wheels to two, then maybe cycling as a prestige activity might succeed.

Even in hilly areas, Conrad says, the bicycle is suitable as a means of transport; it is merely a matter of organisation.

Using the luggage compartment of the funicular railway rather than cycling uphill is a step in the right direction.

Yet he and his partner aren't put off by steep gradients. They have cycled all round the Alps on their lightweight "specials."

Series production is planned in about 18 months. Conrad and Raffler have developed the new design at their own expense.

A cycle manufacturer expressed interest at one point but was deterred by an expertise which claimed that plastic was not sufficiently stable as a cycle frame material.

Undeterred, Conrad and Raffler carried on, and trends seem to bear out their confidence. The first bikes with all-plastic frames are already on sale in the United States.

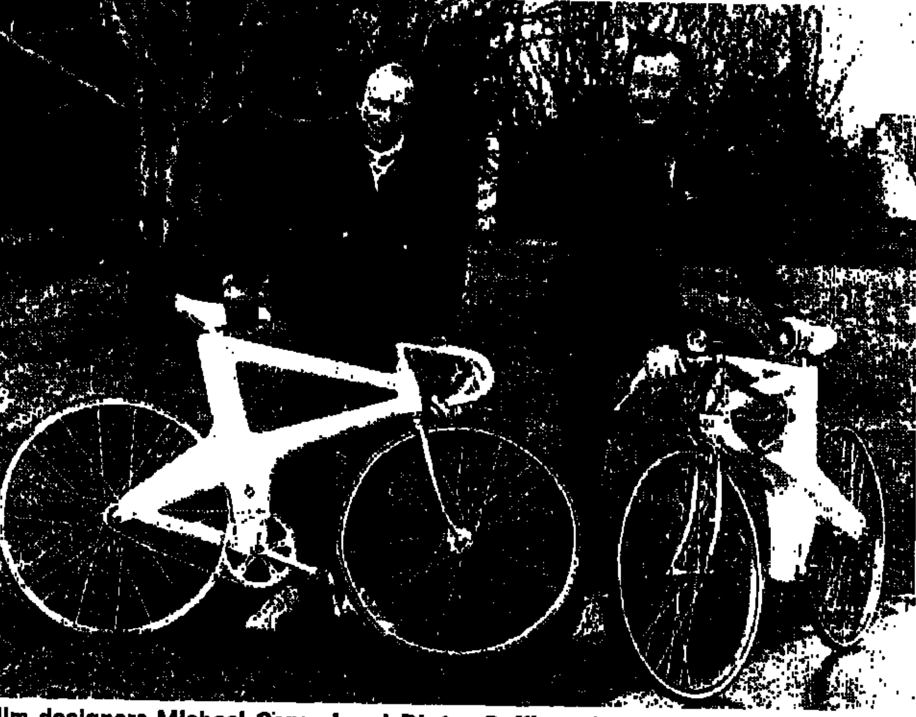
Similar in appearance to conventional pushbikes, they merely use synthetic materials instead of tube steel or aluminium for the frame.

"We were naturally keen to make a name for ourselves in the trade," Raffler says, explaining why he and Conrad have devoted so much time to the project.

He feels it has already been well worth while. Having specialised in sportswear design, he has soon found manufacturers interested in his designs for accessories such as a cycle helmet or a biker's rucksack.

Christiane Wachsmann

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 18 February 1989)



Ulm designers Michael Conrad and Dieter Raffler with their plastic-framed superbikes.

(Photo: Kraufmann & Kraufmann)

German engineer's novel engine runs on supermarket salad oil

You need drive no further than your nearest supermarket to refuel Günter Elsbett's "wonder car," featured recently on German TV. It runs on vegetable oil as sold by all grocers.

Now it is a TV star everyone is asking the same questions: How does the engine work? When is it due to be manufactured? How much will it cost?

Is it surprising that German motorists are amazed by and interested in an environment-friendly car that runs on six litres of salad oil per 100km, equivalent to 47 miles per gallon?

What makes the idea even more intriguing is that salad oil costs less than conventional motor fuel. The cheapest vegetable oil costs 60 pfennigs per litre.

That is barely half the price at the filling station, and the engine will even run on old fat from the frying pan.

Since the TV show its inventor has been inundated in telephone inquiries at his home in Hilpoltstein, Bavaria.

But although the prototype works, and was seen to work on TV, it is still early days. It will be a while before anyone can switch from conventional motor fuel to salad oil. "As a private individual," says Elsbett's patent engineer, Thomas Kaiser, "you can't convert a motor vehicle in Germany on the spur of the moment.

"It would take DM100,000 to get the car licensed and on the road. We are merely developing the idea."

But he readily explains how the engine works: "In a diesel engine the entire air intake is injected into the fuel, we use only the quantity needed. Surplus air rotates round the combustion zone as an insulation mantle.

"If our engine were to be manufactured in numbers comparable with the production figures for conventional diesel engines it would cost less — because it has fewer parts."

The Soviet Union is the first country to have bought licence rights to manufacture the Elsbett engine in versions ranging from 90 to 650 horse power.

German motor manufacturers have yet to show much interest in the idea even though most of them have been experimenting with a wide range of alternative fuels since the oil crisis in the early 1970s.

At Volkswagen in Wolfsburg, for instance, experimental vehicles use rape oil as a fuel. "Whether and when series production will be possible," says Peter Walzer, head of research at VW, "depends on the results of the trials now in progress."

Ground rape oil, he says, is still twice the price of diesel oil. What is more, it probably needs further processing to ensure longer engine life, which would treble the cost.

Yet experiments continue, with alternative fuels ranging from potatoes, sugar beet and maize to bio-ethanol refined from sugar cane (on which over 1.2 million cars run in Brazil) and methanol.

It remains to be seen whether hazardous substances are emitted when these alternative fuel oils are burnt.

The industrial use of rape oil as a lamp fuel was inaugurated by no less a historical personage than Charlemagne, Professor Walzer says.

And if you have misgivings about using foodgrain crops as motor fuel, you may feel less uneasy when you realise that about 30 per cent of the crop has always been used as fodder for horses.

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 15 February 1989)

Continued from page 5

want Western integration to go too far, too fast, because this would block off the path to rapprochement *(Annäherung)* with the East; Mrs Thatcher is also opposed to this, but for different reasons.

I must confess I am quite pleased that neither can speak each other's language. I assume that the interpreters have a diplomatic training and have been taught therefore the value of discretion.

As a result, the conversation between Thatcher and Kohl today on the need for modernising the Lance missiles are likely to be a model of politeness, and the unity of the alliance will remain intact.

I hope Mrs Thatcher has time to see more of Frankfurt, and not just the Alte Oper. I would recommend a trip to the Zoo. I hope too she will reflect that Frankfurt, and not Bonn, should have been the capital of the Federal Republic.

Then there would have been less banks on the Main, and less politicians on the Rhine, and everyone would have been happier.

David Marsh

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 20 February 1989)

■ ART

Bonn museum exhibits Swiss Max Ernst collection

Loplop, the comic bird, draws his claw across the white paper and adds a sentence to his cheerful, arched reflection: "Anche io sono dottore."

Max Ernst came from Cologne. At his parents' request he studied at Bonn University but he had no intention of graduating.

When he was given an honorary doctorate by the university on 8 May 1972 he was pleased enough to adorn the guestbook of his alma mater appropriately.

This guestbook, belonging to the Art History Institute, is an amusing exhibit in a Max Ernst exhibition which proudly presents new material.

Katharina Schmidt has acquired for the Bonn Art Museum, which she directs, 101 illustrated books and 60 printed graphics out of every one of the artist's creative period.

She did this with generous support from the Interior Ministry and with the assistance of the Zürich antiquarian Hans Bolliger, who preferred to have his collection taken in at one place instead of having it dispersed all over the place at an auction.

Bolliger is a Swiss collector and chronicler of Dada in Europe. For him Max Ernst was "a central figure who strongly influenced my life and who moulded my collecting activities."

His first acquisition, a copy of *Une semaine de bonté*, cost him 35 Swiss francs in 1943.

Bolliger got to know Max Ernst ten years later. The contact was friendly — heartfelt dedications made by the artist to Bolliger show this.

Bolliger instantly bought from him "every book and every graphic drawing, even if I had it two or three times already."

Eventually Bolliger was also a dealer. He says today that every collection is a brake block on the road to oblivion.

Since the grim times of National Socialism, "when almost all evidence of human activity was becoming threatened with annihilation," he had seen himself as a brakeman out of protest.

Bolliger said: "To collect is a gesture of protest against the threat of oblivion, being forgotten and decline."

Certainly this fate is not in store for Max Ernst today. But the items held by museums, particularly work on paper, are kept back from a wide public out of conservation considerations, and sometimes they hibernate in a drawer (as for example the complete printed graphic oeuvre of Max Ernst, which has been owned by the city of Hanover since the beginning of the 1970s).

Katharina Schmidt has been more intelligent about this. She has taken the opportunity of the Bolliger collection as well as the bundles of papers on documentation and special literature, donated by collectors, to build up in Bonn the basics for research into Max Ernst's life and work.

Another acquisition has contributed to this aim: a copy of that Cologne teaching aids catalogue, which was discovered ten years ago and proved to be the most important source for the early collage works Max Ernst produced.

Other museums in North Rhine-Westphalia, for example the Düsseldorf collection, include examples of his painting.

The Bonn Art Museum, until now having only a few paintings and, on loan, a group of sculptures, has achieved a fresh importance with the Bolliger collection. The exhibition is one of the last to be mounted in the old building. It includes books and graphics and presents an important aspect of Max Ernst's work. His Dadaesque impetus and surreal fantasy continues to exist with particular intensity in volumes of books and in small format works. A sense of enquiry, his toying with various themes, were ever present in the printed graphics and in the books. He extended and varied classical possibilities within a wide-ranging technique, and his collage novels (*La femme 100 têtes* and *Une semaine de bonté*) are still the mysterious highpoint of his oeuvre — fantastic picture-literature and surreal, anarchistic fairy-tales.



Max Ernst: 'Une semaine de bonté,' 1934.

(Photo: Städtisches Kunstmuseum Bonn)

Hans Bolliger has not gone in for exaggerations in his contribution to the catalogue, beautifully presented and very well worth reading.

He has collected a treasure trove of book graphics of our century from the small books of the early Cologne period up to the *Maximillana* of 1964.

He includes *Repétitions* for Paul Eluard's poems of 1922; the collage novels; the *Histoire naturelle* dating from 1926, a variety of illustrations for literary texts as well as for an essay by Werner Heisenberg on "The beautiful in the exact sciences" of 1971, to name just a few examples.

It is not easy to present so many marvellous graphics in glass-cases. Encouraged by the crystalline structure in Max Ernst's graphics Katharina Schmidt has added to the artificiality of the lines and planes: here a quartz, there an amethyst or an ammonite — a "histoire naturelle," which meant more to Max Ernst than just the title of a book.

Usula Bode

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 17 February 1989)

Guggenheim Museum director shows modern German art

When Thomas Krens was appointed director of the Guggenheim Museum in New York many New Yorkers asked: "Tom who?"

Krens, 42, was quite unknown in New York art circles. The unknown man has now achieved some fame.

Krens catapulted himself into the centre of controversy at the opening of his first exhibition, *Refigured Painting — Representational German Painting from 1960 to 1988* with the subtitle *The German Image*.

A devastating review in the New York Times started things off. The new director was told that he had created a very ambitious exhibition, but the reviewer warned his readers: "This exhibition comes close to being a catastrophe." Then: "After visiting it you will probably never want to see a German picture again."

With so much negative comment it is not surprising that the New York newspaper critic did not find room to describe the exhibition in detail.

No matter whether it was Penck or Polke, Richter or Kiefer almost all the 41 artists included, and their more than 170 works, were hacked to pieces.

There were complaints that the pictures had not been well hung by Baselitz, and that it was "useful" to see the works of Rosemarie Trockel, Georg Herold and Martin Kippenberger, who are "known in New York for their three-dimensional works," but whose "pictures in a painting context made little sense."

German art fans will be able to form their own views; the exhibition will be in Düsseldorf from May and from September in Frankfurt.

It is easy to speculate that five or so years previously the exhibition would have been guaranteed success in New York, as the neo-expressionist answer by German artists to pop and minimal art.

It would have been fêted as a kind of artistic "economic miracle" and there would have been no lack of reverential emulators in Manhattan.

American enthusiasm for the new German art began exactly ten years ago when in the same Guggenheim Museum a major Joseph Beuys exhibition was mounted.

Then traces of a cooling in relations began in the summer of 1987 with the "Berlinart" perspective at the Museum of Modern Art.

It could be that the startling praise heaped on the touring exhibition of Anselm Kiefer's work last year meant that in America a saturation point for German art had been reached.

But unfortunate timing cannot be the total explanation for the current mood. To get to the bottom of it, it is reasonable to take a closer look at the man who has to a certain extent been made the scapegoat.

Thomas Krens is a former college baseball player. He is more than 1.90 metres tall. He has a master's degree from Yale. He seems to welcome being put to the test.

Many insiders on the Hudson River see it more as eerie than charming that Krens has come straight from the provinces. He was the director of the Williams College Museum of Art in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

He has had an astonishing career. In the pleasant hill country of the most western part of New England he was able to build up within the space of a few years a highly modern museum organisation.

Until just a little while ago Williamstown was only of interest in art history for its prestigious Clark Art Institute with its impressive collection of old masters, French impressionists and valuable silver.

Now enthusiasts also come to Williamstown to see for instance the huge photographic collection of the Britons Gilbert & George. But soon Williamstown will have an even greater attraction to entice visitors.

A mammoth museum for modern art is to be put up on the site of a disused textiles factory in neighbouring, industrial North Adams. The funds for this project, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, provided by the state and various foundations, have already been approved.

Important collectors from Milan to London and New York, including the German Architectural Museum in Frankfurt, have promised works on long-term loan.

Thomas Krens gave a gala reception on the factory site in Williamstown. Despite his appointment to the Guggenheim Museum he has remained loyal to his former institution.

Speaking to guests from all over the world, Krens said: "Our annual exhibition here will be a must for every art enthusinst."

Krens is not worried by controversy. He is an unconventional museum director, who likes to roar through Williamstown on a BMW 900. Sceptical New Yorkers did not put him off when he took up his job at the Guggenheim.

He was already saying last summer that New York, "despite the multitude of its exhibitions, has not yet demonstrated that it is aware of the significance as regards quality and importance of contemporary art, which it really should have done.

"I believed it is important to begin showing to the New York public which direction the Guggenheim will take in future. The 'German Image' exhibition gives the Museum an opportunity to intensify its interpretative role in the debate with European art."

Hella Boschmann

(Die Welt, Bonn, 17 February 1989)

■ OBITUARY

Playwright of despair dies at odds with Austria



Austrian novelist, poet and playwright Thomas Bernhard has died of heart failure at his home in Upper Austria.

News of his death was withheld by his relatives until after his burial in Vienna.

The discreet manner of his funeral, obviously at his own request, is in direct contrast to the furore at Vienna's Burgtheater last November caused by his latest play, *Heldenplatz* (Heroes' Square).

For weeks on end politicians, newspapers and alleged patriots were up in arms against Bernhard, who was called the slanderer of Austria, the man who ran down his own country.

Claus Peymann directed the play at the Burgtheater. With its success more and more people recognised in the tragicomic and despairing action of the play, involving a Jewish professor, fresh critical attacks on Austria's past.

Bernhard did not die old, only 58, but he was no longer young when, fifteen years ago, he became well-known to a wide literary public as the most rigorous and lugubrious, the most scandal-prone and unsociable contemporary writer in the German language.

His speeches when he was awarded prizes, devoid of gratitude, were renowned. He created a storm when, with biting comments, he withdrew from the German Academy for Language and Poetry, when former Bonn President Walter Scheel was elected a member.

At the same time critics from all over Europe travelled to Vienna for the premières of his plays, almost all of them directed by Claus Peymann.

His stories and novels made him a figure in world literature. He was liked by few, but he could not be ignored.

It did not seem that this would happen when his first novel, *Frost*, was published in 1963 by Insel-Verlag.

The world, and the literary world with it, was busy with reconstruction, with the re-establishment of the old order, on the one hand, but also with aggressively turning social relationships topsy-turvy.

Almost no-one was prepared to give time and attention to post-war literature of despair, produced by Bernhard, a writer who had turned his back on the spirit of the times, who concentrated on sickness, madness and death.

Frost had to be remaindered. Its background was "standing and waiting in front of hopelessness." His subsequent novels, *Watten* and *Ungenach*, which only appeared in cheap editions from Suhrkamp-Verlag, described a similar background.

Their "sick-making qualities" exposed people, whose awareness of death from childhood onwards grew to the highest point of excitation. Life was a catastrophe. And the "fantastic geometry of disagreement" in the head allowed no way out.

According to Bernhard anyone who did not see this made himself risible.

But despite all this his books dealt with survival. His stories constantly deal with survivors, from *Frost*, the story of a failed painter, to *Verstörung* and *Untergeher*, the decline of a pianist allegedly competing with the genius Glenn Gould.

He is obviously sucked hopelessly into the sombre events and he freed himself by his searching participation, by his language, by his art.

The narrator saves his own life, even if he does not save that of the others. Despair is given expression and finds support in this.

It was perhaps this that led Bernhard early in the 1970s very suddenly to write about his own fate.

He began his five-volume autobiography: in 1975 the first volume appeared, *Die Ursache* (The Cause), the following year *Der Keller* (The Cellar), in 1978 *Der Atem* (The Breath), then *Die Kälte* (The Cold) and *Ein Kind* (A Child).

Until then he had felt himself to be the advocate of the distress of existence which pressed on people timelessly, as it were.

Now he held up the personal distress of his own existence with its causes in the past and in society.

He was born in 1931, the illegitimate son of a servant girl in Holland.

He knew poverty and the narrowness of Austrian life during his childhood. He suffered from his petty bourgeois surroundings in Salzburg, where he went to a Catholic boarding school. In 1948 he almost died of tuberculosis.

In his autobiography he recalled his serious illness. He retraced again his journey through hospitals and TB clinics.

He recalled his fellow-patients, terminally ill and dying, and he recalled the light, the music and the love which his grandfather, Johannes Freumbichler gave him.

Bernhard freed himself from this subjective imprisonment. He was able to distance himself from these events in the past. Life, the world became a stage for him. The dramatist in him took over.

His play *Fest für Boris* was conceived, an orgy of charitableness in which a cripple perishes.

In *Vor dem Ruhestand* a lawyer recalls his career in the Nazi period with ghostly arrogance.

His play *Die Jagdgesellschaft* takes place in the timbered house of the general, who is unaware of the decline of his forests, the pride of his past.

These were followed by the works of his mature years for Bernhard Minetti, in part thrillingly grotesque: *Der Weltverbesserer*, *Der Schein trügt* and *Theatermacher*, a satire on the theatre which Minetti did not play.

Bernhard acquired international recognition with *Auslöschung*.

Thomas Bernhard saw life as a "process of dying," an experience which he never retracted. Later he introduced this into contemporary literature with unique, uniquely gloomy, courage.

He loved music and artistically introduced the rhythms of music, figuratively speaking, into his prose. He was a constant abstruse critic of society.



Thomas Bernhard

(Photo: Isolde Ohlbaum)

He was on the way to counter-checking the dangerous monotony of his complaints and slanders with a humour inspired by Johann Nestroy (1801-1862).

Increasingly he enjoyed being provocative and enjoyed scandals to the full.

But his astonishingly extensive works, which he extracted from his early experiences, did not let one forget for a moment that he regarded himself, as he once put it, on the side of the "prisoners" and never on the side of the "guards."

Not all his novels and plays will survive. But what does survive is great literature.

Bernhard Häussermann

(Hannoversche Allgemeine 17 February 1989)

Grande dame of German stage dies aged 88

Actress Ida Ehre saw as the turning point in her life the day in 1943 when she was released from prison in Hamburg, literally at the last possible moment before being transported to Auschwitz.

Her husband had raised heaven and earth to achieve this, and he gave her later the strength to keep on involving herself for the weak, the oppressed and for peace.

After her experience in 1943 she decided to establish a theatre after the war.

She was born on 9 July 1900. She was the oldest actress, director and theatre manager in the Federal Republic. For 30 years she managed Hamburg's Kammerspiele. True to her intention she founded it in 1945 and to the end she was its inspiration.

If she did not have any roles to play, Walter Jens stepped in. He reworked *The Trojan Women* for her and even wrote for her a Lysistrata, grown old.

She was born in Prerau in Moravia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. She grew up in Vienna.

When she was 18 she made her debute as Goethe's Iphigenia in Bielitz, Silesia, and performed "as any respectable actress should," as Ida Ehre said of herself, all over the place, from Bucharest to Cottbus, from Bonn to Königsberg (now Kaliningrad), and finally Stuttgart, Mannheim and Berlin.

She could be seen in major roles at various theatres in Berlin. She was offered a five-year contract when she moved into the new medium, films.

All these opportunities came to nothing in 1933. She was picked out as a Jewess, but she was protected to a certain extent by her marriage to a non-Jew.

He resigned his secure job as a senior physician in 1939 and both took passage to Chile where Ida Ehre intended to set up a theatre along with other emigrés.

She was on the high seas when she



Ida Ehre

(Photo: Sven Simon)

heard of the outbreak of the war. The ship was forced to return to Hamburg.

Ida Ehre had to suffer the bitter years to the full and lost her mother and sister in the Theresienstadt concentration camp.

Hardly had the war ended than she was thinking about the future. She collected together well-known actors and directors such as Hilde Krahl and Wolfgang Liebeneiner, and never asked them what they had done during the Nazi years.

Ida Ehre wanted reconciliation and did not want to bring any skeletons out of the cupboard.

She opened her theatre to plays which could not be performed before, mainly from America, Britain and France. Hamburg's Kammerspiele made theatrical history with the premiere of Wolgang Borchert's *The Man Outside* on 21 November 1947. The following day Borchert died.

Ida Ehre was the first to recognise the theatrical qualities of this play for radio. She also realised that it was a key work for the post-war generation.

The Kammerspiele did not receive much in the way of subsidy. More and more over the years the theatre had to turn to sophisticated entertainment plays. It could no longer put on works of an ambitious, literary nature.

She fought hard for her theatre and was nicknamed "Mutter Courage des Theaters." Naturally she played Mother Courage in Brecht's play in Hamburg in 1952.

She was honoured many times by the city of Hamburg. She was made an honorary citizen and given an honorary professorship. In 1988 she was given an honorary doctorate by the university.

But her courageous life was haunted to the end by her past. In her memoirs, *Gott hat einen grösseren Kopf, mein Kind*, which appeared in 1985, she wrote about her mistakes and "sins."

"It would be wrong to say that the past pursued me into my dreams, no, on the contrary. The past pursues me only when I am awake. Thoughts about the horrors have not become fewer, they are an inextinguishable part of me. And yet in the last forty years I have known without end much that is beautiful; much that brings happiness, for which I am grateful."

At the end she set her own house in order. The Kammerspiele will be managed by the "Bertha and Ida Ehre Foundation."

A great person in the German theatre is dead. She died in Hamburg on 16 February.

Werner Schulze-Reimpell

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 17 February 1989)

■ FILM FESTIVAL

Berlin strikes a balance, but no really outstanding entry

The Golden Bear at this year's Berlin Film Festival went to Barry Levinson of the United States for his "Rain Man," the Silver Bear to Eli Cohen of Israel for his "Aviya's Summer." Acting awards went to Gene Hackman and Isabelle Adjani. Dusan Hanak of Czechoslovakia won the director's award for his "I Love, You Love." Special awards went to Oliver Stone for his "Talk Radio" and to Wu Ziniu for "Evening Flowers," a Chinese war film.

"You don't know what damage has been done until later," said a Berlin Film Festival visitor — and only half in jest.

He did so in answer to a lady who told him she had seen six or seven films a day, but that was the rule at film festivals, and there had, she said, been "no trouble at all here, no damage done!"

He had no time to go into detail. He had to rush to see his next film.

He took his seat and let the imagery sink in, descending like fresh snow on what he remembered of previous festival entries.

The first film he had seen, 12 days earlier, lay deepest at the back of his mind.

With all the others superimposed on it, could he really remember or compare it with, say, the ninth or the 25th film?

This is a question that must inevitably have occurred to all film festival jurors, and judging this year's Berlin Film Festival entries must have been particularly difficult. Standards varied from not bad to fashionable, and no entries were an unmitigated failure.

Yet despite the well-known names of directors such as Saura, Akerman, Abdrashitov, Rivette, Stone, Parker and Levinson, no one entry was really outstanding.

So who was to be awarded the Golden Bear? An East Bloc or a Western filmmaker, a European or an American, and which one?

All that could be said for sure was who could be ruled out, such as Pantelis Voulgaris from Greece with his trivial soccer film or Yoji Yamada from Japan with his high school lovers performing Hebbel's *Barbier Zitterlein* in the Noh tradition, based on religious dance.

Another no-hoper was Peter Timáar from Hungary with a love story that plunged into deepest tragedy in Belgrade, interesting though his camerawork may have been.

(The "deep" tragedy consisted of an artful secret serviceman making approaches first to a cashier, then to her son, who gets his own back by luring the secret serviceman onto the landing, where he slips on a cake of soap and plunges to his death!)

A number of entries had semi-thriller storylines of this kind. Arguably the most meaningless was Villi Hermann's *Bankomatt*, an Italian-Swiss co-production that can be dismissed as being matt rather than banco. German entries were fairly abysmal too. Norbert Kückelmann's *Schweinegeld* proved to be an insurpassably embarrassing comedy of the banal. Do such well-known actors as Armin Mueller-Stahl no longer read their filmscripts or don't they mind starring in such feeble films? Scripts were a problem in both German and other entries — but not, as it happens, East German entries. Frank Beyer's *Bruch* was a rogues' tale dating back to the late-1940s and featuring most distinctive teenagers and taciturn dialogues in engaging Berlin dialect.



Tom Cruise and Dustin Hoffmann in Barry Levinson's Berlin Golden Bear-winning 'Rain Man' (Photo: dpa)

American entries also showed signs of script trouble — even though the Golden Bear was finally awarded to Barry Levinson for his *Rain Man*.

The choice may have been satisfactory where Dustin Hoffman is concerned, but hardly in respect of the script. It is yet another film about unlike brothers.

The younger brother, played fairly subtly by Tom Cruise, deals in up-market cars, is smart, egocentric and boastful, but nervous, impulsive and under pressure from loan sharks.

The elder brother is behaviourally disturbed, an autistic chatterbox who ought long since to have been institutionalised.

Their father bequeaths everything to the elder son, leaving his smart younger brother nothing but his roses and an old car.

Charlie, the younger brother, kidnaps Raymond (nicknamed Rain Man) to get him to make him his guardian and gain access to their father's money.

They criss-cross the United States in a splendid road movie consisting of attractive landscape and countless motels.

Dustin Hoffman is outstanding in his portrayal of mental rigidity, awkward and wobbling like a bear in a cage, a pitiful figure except that the plot more often requires him to be a figure of fun.

He is autistic but can work out the square root of 2,130. He can remember that 18.3cm of snow fell when they left home.

He farts unconcernedly in a telephone booth yet has such a phenomenal memory that he helps his brother to win a small fortune in a casino.

The audience are amused, but poking fun at autism is surely not the stuff of which gold medals are made.

The basic mistake the film makes is to laugh not with the autist but at him, at his expense. It makes the jury's decision as dubious as the happy end in which the egocentric younger brother turns into a good guy and his brother's keeper.

The script at least avoids the even more appalling mistake of making the autist "curable" at the end of the tale.

Was this year's Golden Bear a political award? Was an American entry due to win this year, as rumour had it? Maybe, but at least the best entry by far, "Aviya's Summer" by Eli Cohen of Israel, was awarded silver. It won silver not only for the moving plot but for the oustanding acting of Kaipo Cohen and Gila Almagor, the little girl and her mother in the film.

Kaipo Cohen's acting was so sensationally impressive that she must surely have merited silver on her own account, but the acting awards also seem already to have been shared out so as to ensure continental balance.

The silver award for acting went to Isabelle Adjani of France for her performance as the self-destructive Camille Claudel in Bruno Nuytten's film of the same name.

The best male actor was judged to be Gene Hackman for his performance as the ex-sheriff and rough, tough, good-guy FBI man in Alan Parker's *Mississippi Burning*.

Oliver Stone's *Talk Radio* was diplomatically cited for its outstanding individual achievement, failing to specify whether the achievement was the script, based on a Broadway play, or Eric Bogosian's acting.

East-West balance was ensured by the director's award, which went to Dusan Hanak of Czechoslovakia for his touching drink-sodden Slovak film *I Love, You Love*.

The jury also saw fit to award a special prize to a Far Eastern entry, Wu Ziniu's *Evening Flowers*, a Chinese war film heavy in symbolism. Like all war films, it was naturally intended as an anti-war film.

Leaving Berlin and the film festival was less trouble than ever this year. One left feeling one had seen more than enough Hollywood films, enough East Bloc glasnost, nothing worth mentioning again from Italy, Sweden and Scandinavia.

Spanish entries were period pieces in historical costume, French ones old artist's studios and modern experimental theatres, Britain blitzed by the Falklands experience.

The Falklands, incidentally, provide the latest anti-war material for the British entry, a film by Paul Greengrass about life in barracks and hospital (rather than war).

The most serious film shown at Berlin this year was Woody Allen's *Other Woman*, more sensible, more mature and more adult than anything else from the United States. Yet it wasn't an official entry, so there were no bears for Woody.

Ruprecht Skasa-Weiss

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 22 February 1989)

■ HEALTH

Alzheimer's symposium shows the need for closer look at research and treatment



Forgotten that telephone number yet again? Annoying, isn't it? But it needn't be a sign of Alzheimer's disease, the gradual mental decline that begins with just such minor, everyday lapses.

Alzheimer's or not is nonetheless the question. There are alarming signs that the frequency of this particular complaint is due to skyrocket in the decades ahead.

It is, without doubt, a very serious complaint. Yet it is anything but what must ordinarily be expected to lie ahead for the aged.

Reliable estimates, as opposed to the scare figures, indicate that nearly six per cent of over-65s in Western Europe show signs of Alzheimer's.

The older the person, the higher the percentage, compounding the problem as life expectancy steadily increases in the wake of advances in modern medicine.

Medical research is encountering difficulty in finding out more about what causes the complaint and what cures there might be.

The main reason is readily apparent; it is that the brain is much more difficult of access than other vital organs.

Even so, research has made promising headway in some respects, as was shown at a recent symposium held in Bad Homburg, near Frankfurt, by Frankfurt University and Hoechst AG research scientists.

A warning note against exaggerated expectations was sounded. Sensational successes, the symposium was told, need not be expected.

Yet research scientists and doctors, not to mention patients and their next of kind, can reasonably expect drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's to be on the market by the early 1990s.

German neurologist

Alzheimer's disease is named after the German neurologist Alois Alzheimer, who first summarised its symptoms 80 years ago.

It is now defined as a progressive decline in crucial functions of the brain. Yet Alzheimer's is not a general name for all manner of conditions of senile dementia.

The medical profession now distinguishes between nearly 40 different processes that can trigger Alzheimer's or similar symptoms. So diagnosis can be extremely exacting.

Mental processes cannot be measured anywhere near as easily or accurately as functions of the lung or a patient's heartbeat.

A number of modern techniques of pictorial representation may be used in diagnosis, but consideration must be given in each case to how great a burden their use may impose and whether they ought to be used on the patient in his or her weakened condition.

That is why consultations with patients and their families are particularly important in Alzheimer cases and similar complaints, more so than in connection with, say, infectious diseases.

In this context psychometric tests have come to assume considerable importance.

They include, for instance, "shopping lists" of varying degrees of difficulty to be memorised by patients and tested at various stages of treatment.

Physical processes that can handicap mental performance particularly include oxygen starvation, to which the brain always responds most sensitively.

It can be the consequence of poor circulation, however caused; it is probably more frequent and widespread than is generally assumed.

Inadequate liquid intake recurs in all discussions about symptoms of Alzheimer's.

Other factors that must invariably be considered are alcohol and drug abuse, environmental toxins and genetic factors.

Trace element deficiency has been suspected of being partly to blame, as have germs that can be transmitted by ticks.

Alzheimer's is thus seen to be a complex disease toward which there are, as a rule, several contributory factors.

Yet distinctions can and must be drawn between Alzheimer's and biological, everyday aspects of ageing.

Conventional symptoms of ageing mainly include a greater likelihood of suffering from heart attacks and a consequently increasing weakness of various organs and systems, such as the heart and the bone structure.

As people grow older the weight of their brains gradually declines and electric impulses emitted by the brain decline in frequency.

Certain feats of intelligence may no longer be performed; an individual's intelligence capacity remains, in principle, unchanged.

This decline is naturally neither automatic nor gradual and regular.

It can only be considered symptomatic of Alzheimer's if certain specific peculiarities occur, are superimposed and worsen.

They begin with instances of forgetfulness and poor concentration. Confusion ensues, heralding a condition in which the patient can no longer cope without outside help.

In the final stages of the disease patients even forfeit the ability to talk and walk.

Medical research is working on the assumption that a disturbance of the *glucose* metabolism in the brain is mainly to blame.

It usually affects only individual parts of the brain, with the result that brain functions fail successively rather than simultaneously.

Parts of the brain that are associated with the emotions are relatively unscathed.

These pathological changes, which are not solely associated with ageing, are the result of a mass demise of nerve cells in the brain, quantitatively reducing the brain substance.

The brain shrinks, as post-mortems — the last bid to clarify the course a complaint has taken — have confirmed.

This can no longer be regarded as a normal feature of growing old. Latest research findings indicate that it occurs by leaps and bounds, frequently within a period of six to 10 years.

Views still differ as to whether the complaint must inevitably take this course and is irreversible once it has reached a certain stage.

There is at least a possibility of attempting to treat the disease, the aim being to maintain brain performance, possibly to decelerate its decline and to stabilise a certain quality of life so that patients' links with their surroundings are not totally severed.

Medical research has taken initial steps in this direction, at varying expense and with varied success.

A wide range of drugs — serious and less serious — is on offer and said to combat an increasingly large number of symptoms that affect brain functions of one kind or another.

The pharmaceutical industry recently said there were over 100 drugs and preparations available in various parts of the world (not all being available or licensed for sale everywhere) and claimed to help treat symptoms of Alzheimer's.

Treatments available in the Federal Republic, in some cases even on a doctor's prescription, to treat symptoms of Alzheimer's and similar complaints is mainly aimed at influencing metabolic processes and oxygen supply.

Success cannot be guaranteed, says the pharmaceutical commission of the German Medical Council.

The commission also notes that specific, desirable effects can take months to occur and may, as in all cases of treatment for serious complaints, be accompanied by serious side-effects.

Time and side-effects are factors of particular importance in medical treatment of the aged.

So new drugs to treat upsets in brain performance, to keep to this general concept, must achieve more than drugs now in use.

The Hoechst Group, the leading German drug manufacturer, has catalogued major requirements.

The compatibility of new drugs is, as several speakers noted in Bad Homburg, a most important point.

They would invariably be administered on a permanent basis to ageing or aged patients with weakened organ systems and suffering from other complaints for which they were under other medication.

At a recent press conference Hoechst spokesmen proudly announced that several anti-dementia drugs were being developed by the Group.

They were aimed in particular at halting the steady decline in a number of neuro-transmitters, or "messenger" substances, in the brain.

This decline heavily influences symptoms of Alzheimer's. Glucose output needs to be improved. Indirect influence must also be brought to bear on neuro-transmitters.

Several potential Hoechst Alzheimer drugs have already reached the first stages of clinical trials.

But they still have a long way to go before they are licensed by the Federal Health Department and can be prescribed to treat German patients.

All practical forecasts indicate that the introduction of drugs to treat Alzheimer's is sure to be accompanied by difficulties of many kinds. They will in part be due to pharmaceutical considerations, but equally to the condition of aged and frequently depressive patients suffering from liquid deficiency and other complaints for which treatment cannot be interrupted.

Treatment will thus, as discussed in Bad Homburg, almost certainly consist of several stages and a variety of drugs — the state of affairs dismissed as "over-medication" in the recent German debate on a reform of the health service.

This description, incidentally, was based mainly on financial rather than on medical arguments.

With problems on all sides, any treatment alternative medicine might be able to suggest must inevitably be considered, not to mention methods of prevention and prophylaxis.

The dispute over the respective worth of "natural" and school medicine is waged no less bitterly in connection with degenerative complaints of the central nervous system than in other contexts.

Success is hard to check in either case. As for prophylaxis, it is conceivable, in principle at least.

But it must constantly be borne in mind that brain cells are not renewed in the course of Alzheimer's disease and that all attempts at prophylaxis must be aimed at keeping the patient mentally active and independent for as long as possible.

Keep brain active

This objective has a far-reaching bearing on all treatment. More could clearly be done in the early stages of the particularly advanced conditions of Alzheimer's.

The brain, for instance, must be kept constantly active. Mental training to slow down the pace of biological ageing is a technique that could well make sense, the Bad Homburg gathering was told by a number of speakers.

As one put it: "A practised, constantly exercised brain may well be less susceptible."

Wide-ranging measures to forestall upsets in oxygen supply to the brain and metabolic disturbances can, by the same token, be considered long before old age too.

This applies even more when the aim must be to nurse the remaining mental faculties in an advanced case of Alzheimer's and to counteract swift decline.

As for prevention, it has at first glance little, in principle, to do with treatment of individual patients and the care and attention provided by their families.

An overall climate of opinion favourable for research into the ageing of organs and organ systems is naturally desirable, especially as it now tends to be neglected in Germany.

The Federal Health Department ought, for that matter, to take less time to probe a new drug before licensing it. The procedure can at present take up to two and a half years.

People over 50 tend to feel time flies. Ought not everything possible to be undertaken to stabilise life rhythms stricken by Alzheimer's?

Ought not everything to be done to maintain as much quality of life as at all possible?

There are strong arguments in favour of holding an Alzheimer's hearing in Bonn to take a closer look, via this particularly serious complaint, at the factors that hamper research and treatment in the German health system.

Reinhard Biehl

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 17 February 1989)

■ MODERN LIVING

Private enterprise 'rides roughshod' over data protection regulations

People have been shocked by the first report on data protection in private enterprise in Hesse, which has been put before the state assembly in Wiesbaden.

The report describes hair-raising infringements of regulations in commercial sectors which are regarded as serious and reliable, to whom citizens innocently and unsuspectingly hand over personal information, organisations such as banks and insurance companies.

The report has been produced as a result of the Hesse Data Protection Act, in force since 1987. This legislation makes it obligatory for the Wiesbaden state government to report on the activities of officials responsible for protecting data, including areas which are not usually open to the public.

Lawyers and computer experts from the regional councils in Darmstadt, Giessen and Kassel are responsible for this kind of control.

They followed up, for instance, the complaint of a woman who previously had held a joint current account with her husband. When she was separated from him the account was continued in her name.

A few months later the bank willingly gave her ex-husband information about monthly credits from a relation. The bank even went so far as to provide this information in writing — almost a year after the man's right to operate the account had lapsed.

Naturally he produced the bank's information in legal proceedings about maintenance. The bank maintained that the "assistance given" was right and proper, and the woman's court action failed.

The public prosecutor held the view that the bank's obligation to confidentiality had not been broken.

Data protection officials were equally scandalised about the lax handling of confidential information in the case of a man who closed his account with his bank after a disagreement.

The bank cancelled credit arrangements which were still current and reported this credit cancellation to the Schufa, Germany's leading credit rating agency.

The Schufa organisations are supported by savings banks, banks, retailers and mail-order houses. They provide their principals with information about people's credit standing, and the banks and others send information to the Schufa offices in the country.

When a few months later the man wanted to open an instalment credit he was sent packing.

For a loan of this kind an enquiry is automatically made at the local Schufa, which came back with the information about the cancelled loan — an indication of a person's insolvency or unwillingness to repay a loan.

Strict measures are only applied when a private person wants to know what data has been stored about him. But different rules seem to apply in the exchange of data between Schufa, banks and other firms.

The data protection officials found fault with the high rate of mix-ups involving people, the poor way data was handled, that old and outdated information was passed on, and that data control, where it existed, was ineffective — and there was a lack of will to improve, as is shown by the following case.

A customer's application for a loan to buy a car was rejected after information was provided by Schufa. According to Schufa a person of the same name had filed for bankruptcy.

In view of this mix-up the data protection officials demanded the application of greater security measures, such as reporting on the assignment of data.

In their report data protection officials *said that their demands were met with this* response: "Schufa has not been prepared so far to take up measures of this kind."

Another man, who wanted to open an ordinary current account, was probably the victim of a similar potentially embarrassing and serious mix-up.

As is usual the bank made enquiries at Schufa. Schufa replied that a person with a similar Christian and surname, date of birth (but with a different second Christian name and another address) had given up his home and left many debts behind him.

A little while later the astonished man received at home any number of unwarranted demands for payment.

The data protection officials do not think too highly of credit enquiry agencies which collect information about companies and private people and pass this on.

Criticism was made, for instance, that bank employees, who unlawfully used their contacts to get information for private purposes, information which mail order houses asked for about people without producing a justifiable reason.

When a woman wanted to take out sickness insurance with a premium of DM39.50 per month a credit enquiry agency did not shy away from sounding out her neighbours and even her employers, and then filed the information away.

The data protection officials considered this was going too far. They regarded this as inadmissible intrusion into the "protected private area."

The firm was asked to erase the information, but in vain. The report said: "The firm was not prepared to comply with this request."

This case highlights the limits of the data protection officials' jurisdiction. They can only take action, for instance, if a person concerned has well-founded reasons which show that through the use of data about him his legal rights were infringed.

Investigations by data protection officials are only possible if the information is used for purposes for which it was not intended — for example by credit enquiry agencies, detectives or organisations selling address lists.

Furthermore data protection officials can only make enquiries and not order a course of action. If need be they can in a few cases impose fines — if, for instance, there is too much delay in providing officials with the information they ask for, or the information proves to be incorrect.

Criticism of the legal regulations is increasing, and it is hoped that the jurisdiction of data protection officials will be extended in the amendment to the Federal Data Protection Act which is due to come before the Bundestag soon.

In the meantime more and more information is fed into computer systems. There is a flourishing trade and exchange of personal data, and there are many violations of protection regulations.

There was one real howler recently concerning a match-maker in Hesse who specialised in finding German husbands for Asian women.

He wrote to prospective clients that he would only have done his job properly once they — the clients — were the proud owners of marriage lines.

To show how successful he had been he sent photocopies of his clients' marriage certificates (in all 14).

These included information about the name and date of birth of the married couples, in some instances the names of their parents and employers and their address as well as the date of marriage.

Just how many the match-maker sent out before the data protection officials appeared on the scene is unknown.

Such actions are, of course, illegal. But data protection officials cannot bring charges. Only the people directly concerned can do that.

Anne Riedel

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 9 February 1989)

Women awarded derisory compensation

Renate Schmidt, an SPD Bundestag member, is concerned that insurance companies treat women injured in *road accidents shabbily.*

She said: "When a housewife is involved in an accident without fault on her part third party liability insurance only pays out for her physical injury at rates similar to car write-offs."

That is no exaggeration. When a Hamburg housewife was killed in a road accident the insurance only paid her husband DM1,000 in compensation.

In another case the widower, who had a small child to care for, was paid a pension of DM165 a month.

Gerda Merklein, chairwoman of the Schabach branch of the German Housewives Association, described the dilemma in this way: "The housewife is not properly integrated into our society. She has a shadowy existence."

Her social status is generally assessed at a low level in the public domain. Courts also have taken a limited view of the value of her gainful employment.

The table commissioned by the Allianz insurance company, which insurers use, shows this clearly.

If a working woman becomes a paraplegic after an accident and is restricted to a wheelchair, she can claim disability of between 80 and 100 per cent.

But a housewife who suffers in the same way is only regarded as being disabled for her work for 62.7 to 75.2 per cent, according to lawyers.

If she handles the budget for an average family of four she can claim household assistance for 42 hours per week.

This is applied in accordance with the Federal Employees' Collective Salary Agreement and ranks at the lower end of the scale, between grades 8 and 10.

Kurt Landau, labour expert at Stuttgart University, said that this was far too low.

He said that a housewife and mother could not be replaced by a cleaning woman and a children's nurse. "The mother must be available 24 hours a day. No replacement will put in that much effort," he said.

In his view the monetary value of a housewife's work must be revalued upwards.

In principle third party liability insurers have nothing against this. What is disputed is how this should be done.

The far-ranging questionnaire which Landau has produced has met with a cool reception by insurance companies.

Landau calls for detailed investigations to be made after each accident to find out how many children have to be cared for and how much time and effort the mother must give to them.

He wants taken into consideration if a bed-ridden grandparent has to be nursed, how lavish the family budget is and whether the family does much entertaining.

He wants insurance companies to take into consideration the size of the family home, and how often the housewife cooks, cleans up, does the washing and irons; and what kind of home appliances make the housework easier, and so on.

Nuremberg lawyer Herbert Härlein said that such an assessment system would be too detailed. He regards the present arrangement for assessing compensation as the best solution.

"Of course actuarial tables have to be continuously revised if fresh academic information calls for this," he said. "But the process must be practical for people who have to deal with such cases every day."

But housewives concerned are not prepared to go along any more with their "flagrant disadvantage."

In a petition presented to the Bundestag at the end of March 1987 the German Housewives Association called for equal status with other occupation groups.

The table of compensation drawn up by Allianz makes "third party liability insurers enemies of the institution of the family in this country," according to the Housewives Association.

When the Bonn government referred families concerned to legal action, Renate Schmidt says that obviously the government is not fully aware of the problems involved.

Only two out of 100 cases are decided at court. The risks are too great for a family which has suffered in this way, pitting itself against the disproportionate defences which powerful third party liability insurers can muster.

Renate Schmidt calls for the setting up at least of a maintenance fund, provided by insurance companies. Many families cannot afford to provide for home help until the family gets reimbursed by the insurance company.

Renate Schmidt is aware that some lawyers do not recommend to their clients taking their case to court. So many cases which have gone before the courts end up with a settlement which is "a disgrace."

At the 27th traffic courts conference in Goslar in January, Ute Alt of the Housewives Association was able to confirm that something is being done.

Many traffic specialists at this conference were agreed that a commission of independent experts should be set up to reassess the value of a housewife's work.

Ute Alt is herself a housewife and mother of three. She is confident that the discrimination against housewives in insurance matters will soon come to an end. Lawyers and insurance experts are generally reconsidering the matter.

She said optimistically: "There are among them many fathers of families who have themselves in their private lives tasted the reverse side of the laws as they are applied."

Regina Urban

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 15 February 1989)

■ OUR WORLD

Foreign service advice bureau counsels diplomats' families

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

Sociable, good at languages, highly motivated, strong-minded and willing to accept regular transfers. These are just some of the main attributes expected of a good diplomat.

If, in addition to these qualities, he or she happens to have an uncomplicated and flexible wife or husband as well as "easy-to-look-after" children — who, it goes without saying, also have the above-mentioned attributes — this person is an ideal choice for the job.

As "nobody is perfect," however, the supposed dream job with its aura of the great wide world often turns out to be a snare for even the most intact family unit.

The demands made on members of the diplomatic service are substantial. The constant changing of their places of residence (every three to four years), the frequent changing of schools by their children and the often involuntary unemployment of marital partners can wear down even the most robust individuals in time.

One result is a divorce rate which even by West German standards is particularly high.

In an effort to counteract this tendency and at the same time improve the dwindling appeal of the diplomatic service's job image the Bonn Foreign Office set up a division for "Family and Women's Affairs" two years ago to provide practical, legal and psychological support to persons seeking advice.

This central counselling institution has proved a great help to many people.

The head of the division, Gudrun Hogaust-Pleuger, who took on the job three months ago, confirms that her office has been confronted by an increasing work-load.

The petite diplomat and mother of two children is familiar with the worries and problems facing her colleagues following her own experience as Consul-General in Nancy, France.

She knows from personal experience with her own family that children suffer most from this special situation. One day her son came home from school and said that he now knew what "Turkish children feel like back home."

Such painful experiences are confirmed in a special report on the effects on children of repeatedly changing from one school to another compiled by the Institute of Psychology at the University of Heidelberg for the Bonn Foreign Office.

Although particularly gifted children may in fact benefit from attending different schools and from the variety of cultural environment this situation may have extremely detrimental effects on others. Slower children who need more time to adapt as well as children with defects such as dyslexia or speech impediments will "fall by the wayside." According to the report the domestic situation can become a further strain for the children. Diplomats at executive level generally have a high professional motivation. Thanks to their privileged position doors are wide open to them and their families in their host countries.



'Can I help you?' Gudrun Hogaust-Pleuger of the Bonn Foreign Office. (Photo: privat)

Employees at the lower and intermediate level of the diplomatic service (including chauffeurs, doormen and secretaries), however, are more likely to drift into social isolation.

Women especially (97 per cent of all employees in the typing pool are women) are adversely affected.

For them working abroad either means doing without husband and children or coming to some arrangement with their husbands so that the latter takes on the role of housewife.

Or, if this falls through, coping with life as a single parent

The family counselling division at the Foreign Office in Bonn does its best to improve the situation.

It tries, for example, to make preparations for apprenticeships and university places for young people returning home or to help parents looking for accommodation.

In the respective host countries the division also assists members of the families of diplomats to find a job or to a place in German-language schools.

"Our main task," says Gudrun Hogaust-Pleuger, "is to find plenty of time for discussions.

"A growing number of people, especially women, drop in to see us when on leave, just to ask for our opinion or advice."

Members of the diplomatic service not only suffer from psychological strains, but to a growing extent from the difficult living conditions in host countries.

The division tries to ensure that families with very young children, for example, are not sent to certain cities, such as Ankara, Warsaw, Budapest and Mexico City, because of environmental pollution there.

In Warsaw, for example, babies are not supposed to have a bath in tapwater — but who in Poland can afford mineral water in the quantities required or pay for imported water from Germany?

In Bogota and Caracas, on the other hand, the crime rate is so high that families of diplomats have to hire private guard services.

The once so elegant parquet of high diplomacy has apparently lost a lot of its sheen.

It's high time that the Foreign Office started polishing up the image of the diplomatic corps.

Caroline Mascher

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 20 February 1989)

Integration and reunification

Continued from page 5

ple to self-determination. Above all, his assurance that this is "a general principle to which there can be no exception" was reiterated.

This led on to the German Question, which, from the Soviet perspective, is currently characterised by two aspects.

One is the relationship between Bonn and East Berlin.

The other, more important aspect, however, is a question which is much older than the two German states: security.

Providing the question of security has been regulated and there is a guarantee that no risk of war emanates from Germany the aspect of relations between the two German states is no longer a matter of concern for Moscow.

This stance was not far away from what American speakers said.

They claimed that the German Question is not an issue which worries them too much.

If the division between East and West can be overcome — and this includes security and a balance of interests — then the Germans should be free to choose how they wish to live; reunified or not.

After all, they stressed, the Germans are not an "inferior people."

Apart from the remarks from the French side the real contrast to this view came from the European Commission.

The Commission would like to fix a timetable for the integration and removal of economic, political, territorial and cultural borders of European Community member states.

This is bound to be a difficult task. Yet it is a desired and agreed objective.

It remained vague, however, whose objective it is — and with what legitimation.

What remained was the impression that there is a feeling in Brussels and in other parts of Western Europe that a political race is in progress the aim of which is to protect Europe against reorganising things on the basis of a balance of interests of all parties concerned by creating irreversible *faits accomplis.*

Karl Feldmeyer

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 22 February 1989)